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THE MONTH

SEPTEMBER 1952

ST. MARIA GORETTI

E. B. STRAUSS

THE VOGUE FOR MARLOWE

PENNETHORNE HUGHES

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BURNS OATES

ST. MARIA GORETTI

By

E. B. STRAUSS

IF I REMEMBER RIGHTLY, this series of articles was originally pre-advertised under the title of "My Favourite Saint." If it were not casting reflections on editorial policy, I would be bold enough to register an objection to such a sentimental title which reminds one too readily of the kind of questions and answers that used to appear in theatre programmes: "What is your favourite colour?"—"What is your favourite perfume?" Even if a contributor to this series were expected in his article to answer the question, "For which Saint do you have a special devotion?" I should still protest, as the issue is far too personal and intimate to be raised in public without discomfort.

I am assuming that the question which the editor really has in mind is: "The life of which Saint has in your opinion special significance for the modern world, and why?"

When I put this question to myself, paradoxically enough the answer that immediately occurred to me was Maria Goretti. No sooner had I made this decision than I regretted my presumptuousness, for an article on this child-saint would require to be written with immense discretion if it were to emerge neither as chocolate-box picture nor as an arid essay on "chastity as a positive heroic virtue." It may well be adjudged that this article falls between the two stools.

The simple facts of the Saint's life are easily related in a few words: Maria was born on 16 October, 1890, the third child of seven, to poor peasants living in the neighbourhood of Corinaldo in the Province of Ancona. Owing to extreme poverty, the family migrated and finally landed up in a village called Ferriere di Conca, which is seven and a half miles from Nettuno, which itself is not far from Anzio.

In order to make both ends meet, Luigi, Maria's father, entered into partnership and shared a house with a man called Serenelli. Serenelli had two sons, the younger of whom, Alessandro by name, plays a very important part in the story. Maria was aged

eight and a half when the family settled in Ferriere; and she would appear to have been an unusually serious-minded and pious child from the start.

She experienced her first great grief in May 1900, at the age of ten, when her father died of the *sequelae* of malaria.

In addition to her unusual piety which had almost an adult quality—she would trudge for miles on foot for the privilege of hearing Mass and exhibit none of the usual signs of distraction—she had all the domestic virtues to a remarkable extent: she was generous and uncomplaining; she cheerfully undertook more than her fair share of the household chores, and acted as an additional mother to her younger brothers and sisters.

This illiterate child who lived in conditions of grinding, although not necessarily in itself degrading, poverty, took her first Communion on the feast of Corpus Christi 1901. It was before the days of Pope Pius X, who decreed that children should take their first Communion early and communicate often; and children did not then do so before the age of eleven.

Maria Goretti's radiant purity impressed all with whom she came in contact from the start; and it was this very quality that struck her subsequent murderer most of all. The nature and quality of purity will call for some analysis later. It should be stressed here, perhaps, that Maria Goretti was an outstandingly beautiful child, judged even by the standards of Italy, the country of beautiful children.

Alessandro Serenelli was by then a young man of twenty, passionate, selfish and undisciplined. There is no reason to suppose that he was the monster of depravity that some pious commentators would like to make out, for any hot-blooded man is in certain circumstances potentially a sex-murderer. Moreover, in the case of a man endowed with a certain kind of temperament, purity and innocence serve to stimulate rather than inhibit sexual desire. Even in these days of sexual "enlightenment," the average man likes to enjoy the fantasy of his wife having been virginal before marriage.

It would seem that for some time prior to the final tragedy he had sought to attract Maria, but had succeeded only in arousing her alarm and disgust. In our unspeakably vulgar modern idiom we might say that "he made many passes at her, but she was not having any."

About a month before the murder, he attempted a serious sexual assault, but Maria managed to escape. However, he told her that he would certainly kill her if she breathed a word of this to her mother or to any one else; and Maria, who, although innocent, was by no means ignorant of the ways of the world in which she lived, knew that he was quite capable of carrying out his threat.

The crisis came on 5 July, 1902, the vigil of the feast of the Precious Blood. Owing to an unusual and unavoidable concatenation of circumstances, partly planned by Alessandro himself, who had provided himself with a dagger, the two found themselves alone in the house. Alessandro made it quite clear what he desired of her and threatened her with death if she refused to yield. Even at that moment, thinking more of Alessandro's moral welfare than of her own danger, she tried to resist, saying, "No, no, no! God does not wish it. If you do that you'll commit a sin, you'll go to hell." He thrust a handkerchief into her mouth to prevent her calling for help, pinioned her, and threatened her with his dagger. A mere nod indicating assent ("O.K., you win," in American film-language) would have saved her life; material sin would have been committed, but there could be no moral theologian who would say that formal sin were involved so far as she was concerned.

The infuriated Alessandro struck with his dagger no less than fourteen times back and front. He left her a bleeding heap on the floor with her entrails protruding from one of the abdominal wounds.

The drive in the horse-drawn ambulance over the seven and a half miles of bad road to Nettuno must have been an agonizing experience. The operation lasted for two hours or more, but all that the surgeons could do was to extend her life for another twenty hours. In that brief period, she became a Child of Mary, received the Last Sacrament and specifically forgave her murderer. When she died in the afternoon of 6 July, 1902, she was ten days short of eleven years and nine months.

She was buried in the cemetery of Nettuno, but on 26 January, 1929, her body was exhumed and placed in the Church of Our Lady of Graces.

Maria Goretti was beatified on 27 April, 1927, and canonized on 24 June, 1950, amid scenes of unparalleled enthusiasm. Another

child-martyr for purity had been raised to the altars of the Universal Church. The official pictorial representation of the Saint is conventional and sentimental in the extreme, but somehow quite fitting: it portrays her holding a spray of Easter lilies and a palm branch, symbolizing the triumph of purity; and her head is haloed by a narrow circle of light.

Alessandro narrowly escaped being lynched. He was tried in Rome, found guilty, and sentenced to thirty years' penal servitude with hard labour.

It would seem that his attitude to his crime and punishment was one of cynical indifference for a number of years, but that by 1910 he had repented. The sincerity of his repentance was not doubted by those whose training enables them to judge of such matters. It will be of interest to psychologists to note that his changed dispositions were reflected in a dream in which Maria Goretti figured and which made use of simple, naïve symbols.

The last three years of his sentence were remitted; and he is now employed as a gardener in an Italian monastery. He had the good sense and the good taste not to be present at the young Saint's canonization.

In the meantime, Assunta, Maria Goretti's mother, had become housekeeper to the Archpriest of Corinaldo. On Christmas Day, 1937, Assunta and Alessandro received Communion side by side; and Alessandro spent his Christmas in the presbytery. Incidentally, I, who am opposed to capital punishment on many grounds, find in this "spiritual success" story of Alessandro a sound Christian argument against it. Assunta is still alive, aged eighty-six.

This is scarcely a story which is likely to appeal much to the non-Catholic world of the 1950's: Victorian melodrama, not even Greek tragedy! The villain repents after a dream of white lilies and the like, he is forgiven by the family of the murdered child, who is herself officially canonized with more than the usual splendour associated with such ceremonial! All this occurring in an age in which "a fate worse than death" has become a stale music-hall joke and in which many of my influential psychiatric colleagues teach that the "freeing of the libido" is a desirable end in itself!

Permit me to play the part of the modern *promotor fidei* for a moment: Maria Goretti acted almost reflexly in a state of acute panic to the kind of situation which she had been conditioned to

regard as the most terrible that could be imagined. No heroic virtue could possibly have been realized. This is not borne out by the facts: it will be remembered that Alessandro made sexual advances to Maria on two previous occasions and the third time gave her plenty of time to choose between death and rape. Moreover, even one's least reflective conduct at any given moment depends upon dispositions that have been laid down in the past; in other words, "virtue" is much more of a habit than an isolated instance. And, with regard to patterns of sexual behaviour, the authors of the book of that name say: "Far the most of what people learn to feel and to do in the realms of sex is learned from other individuals. Human learning, in other words, customarily occurs in a social context. For this reason the impact of learning upon human sexuality is best understood within the frame of reference provided by the societies of which the individual is a member." Maria Goretti's "frame of reference" was a Christian one; and within it she learned that "impurity" leads to the death of the soul. That is still the official Catholic teaching, although it has come to mean less and less in this present age.

Perhaps it would be desirable at this stage to analyse the concept of purity a little more closely. What is usually understood by the word "modesty" certainly enters into it, but modesty itself requires to be further broken down. Its two major components may be termed *pudor* and *modestia*. *Pudor* is essentially relative, i.e., dependent on time, place and pattern of culture. In itself it possesses no moral significance. It is no offence against *pudor* for women in this and many other countries to wear a Bikini bathing dress, whereas in Portugal it is regarded as "impudic" for a male over twelve to wear bathing slips on the beach. When I was a boy, a woman's dress that came above the ankles was considered shocking; the male Dinkas of the Sudan are completely nude and are aware of no embarrassment. It is one of the mistakes associated with prudishness and puritanism to regard *pudor* and *modestia* as identical. It is likely that those who make a cult of nudism fall into the same error.

Modestia, on the other hand, incorporates a moral value and is therefore rooted in the human situation.

Nevertheless, it is on the whole true to say that those who from one motive or another fail to conform to the "pudic" patterns accepted by the community in which they live are

likely to be lacking in *modestia*. It must not be forgotten, however, that there are many people in whom the social quality of *pudor* is deeply ingrained but who are poorly endowed with *modestia*, which is "the heart of the matter."

The fact that Maria Goretti was highly "pudic" can be recorded with an approving smile, but not with a smirk, I hope. We are told, for instance, that, when she was attending to the various needs of her little brothers and sisters, she was excessively careful in matters of nudity and the like, and that she never uttered an "impure" word in the whole of her short life. These patterns of external conduct were largely the result of conditioning. Italian Catholicism was in those days strongly coloured by all the Victorian proprieties—and still is to a certain extent. Moreover, it must be remembered that, in the case of a poor Italian peasant family living in shockingly overcrowded conditions, rigid pudic patterns must regulate the social life if the virtue of *modestia* is to be given a chance to establish itself. I mention this fact lest we, with our mid-twentieth century eyes, should regard Maria Goretti as a prig and a prude: so far as these external things go, she was a child of her age and place, who had been fortunate enough to have had a strict, but loving, mother possessed of enough spiritual horse-sense to be able to distinguish between the essentials and the inessentials of life.

If *pudor* represents the material aspects of one of the chief components of purity, at the social level at any rate, *modestia* provides the form in the scholastic sense. Forms do not of their very nature lend themselves to verbal analysis or description. Such attempts result merely in the using of special terms in place of words which already convey a full meaning to those who know the language. Nevertheless, it may be pointed out that *modestia* (or true modesty) is a quality which depends on a passionately intense desire for personal integrity—integrity of body, mind and spirit. It is in the sexual situation that the right (and duty) to preserve the integrity of one's own body is most apparent. Incidentally, bodily integrity can be also violated by gluttony and other bodily excesses; and, interestingly enough, the acceptance of low sexual standards represents a kind of emotional greediness. "The average sensual man" (and woman, of course) is so afraid of missing the chance of a possibly satisfying erotic experience, in one direction or another, that he gluttonously

"helps himself" on every likely occasion; and, strangely enough, he will accuse himself of social or moral cowardice if he "misses a good thing." People like Maria Goretti—and martyrs for purity, even those who are willing to experience a little momentary emotional discomfort on its behalf, are few and far between—have an ever-present realization that lightly to surrender one's bodily integrity even to the most compelling needs of the moment upsets the whole rhythm of the universe.

Let the devil's advocate speak again: What outmoded folly! A man who has not enjoyed a rich and varied sexual life is only half-alive, cannot possibly understand the feelings of his less-inhibited fellow-men or express himself creatively. That, at any rate, is the way in which we are pleased to rationalize our present-day attitudes. What is not sufficiently realized is that at all levels, from the neuro-physiological to the highest central level, every vital instinct is accompanied by its counter-instinct, and that in the last analysis it is a function of the human will to choose between the two. It is the quality of an experience rather than the number and variety of a set of experiences which determines its meaning and value. Thus, the intention to enter into a permanent sexual relationship and make a success of it in all directions, or a positive act of the will in favour of continence chosen for reasons which have the compelling cogency of the moral law in any of its aspects, constitutes "richness" in a much truer sense than does a tedious routine of promiscuity.

It is important to emphasize that Catholics, who are often ignorantly supposed to despise the body and its pleasures, in fact value these things so highly that the idea of the preservation of bodily integrity gives these things their ultimate significance and dignity.

Even the non-Catholic can appreciate the Church's condemnation of Communism on the grounds that Communism denies the value of the individual soul and the essential dignity of the human situation. Therefore it is a little hard to understand why it is not equally apparent that a departure from the traditional standards of the Christian sexual ethic has precisely the same effect. St. Augustine who, after "a rich and varied sexual life," fell so passionately in love with God, realized the truth of this and thereafter became devastatingly sane.

It may have jarred on some of my readers that on a few occa-

sions I ostentatiously employed modern popular idiom. I did so in order to bring out the contrast between the shattering dignity of the sacrifice of the peasant-child with her habit of believing that the forced surrender of her integrity involved "a fate worse than death," and the standards of the world which provided the setting for the drama.

A practising Catholic who accommodates to lax standards at least realizes that he is allying himself with the forces of vulgarity and disintegration. The average non-Catholic who behaves in the same way fondly believes that he has emancipated himself from out-of-date superstitions and archaic tabus.

Perhaps that is the chief reason why the canonization of Maria Goretti at the height of the splendours of the last Holy Year strikes one as being particularly significant and timely. It came as a clarion call of protest against the hopeless dreariness of low personal standards. The decency, dignity and essential maturity of this illiterate child's behaviour-patterns should appeal to all of us, simple or lettered, who feel that the times are indeed out of joint and fear the future. Moreover, it is very fitting that a Church that claims to be universal should set its most impressive machinery in action to honour an obscure child of the people. Great intellectuals and important public figures such as St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher are raised to the altars of the Church without encountering too great inertia. Ecstasies and mystics stimulate the imagination to such an extent that their causes are already half-won. St. Teresa of Lisieux, whom someone admiringly called the "Saint behind Nottingham lace curtains," stood less of a chance, but is now recognized as one of the greatest of all the Servants of God. It is almost miraculous, or rather evidence of the continued guidance by the Holy Spirit of the See of Rome which never puts a foot down wrong in these matters, that this Lyceum melodrama is now enabled to be played to crowded houses for all time until it is seen in its true proportions as an important Act in the drama of Life Eternal itself.

THE VOGUE FOR MARLOWE

By
PENNETHORNE HUGHES

INTEREST IN CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE can never be said to have flagged, ever since Swinburne wrote the famous essay calling him "the first English poet." Yet in our lifetime we have learnt much more about his history, and have seen far more careful analysis of his work than was before possible, or, perhaps, even thought worth while. Some of the plays have been broadcast—the medium suits them excellently—there has been Mr. Tyrone Guthrie's production of *Tamburlaine* at the Old Vic, and a new examination of Marlowe by the Professor of English Literature at the Sorbonne. Most recently, the current state of Marlovian scholarship is well set out by Mr. Philip Henderson in a contribution to the excellent Longmans series "Men and Books."¹ Until fairly recently, the ordinary non-specialist usually knew only three things about Marlowe, apart from the fact that he was one of the greatest of Shakespeare's predecessors, probably collaborated with him, and influenced his early manner. These were: that Marlowe "invented" blank verse, that he was a member of the literati who mixed drinks and epigrams at the Mermaid tavern, and finally that he was killed by a serving-man in a drunken brawl at Deptford. Needless to say, these beliefs are quite unjustified, and in the first instance demonstrably untrue. Marlowe did not invent blank verse, but merely modified it (incorporating some of the melody of Spenser) and gloriously confirmed its potentialities. He was probably lying in St. Nicholas' Churchyard well before any circle had been formed which gave rise to the legend of the Mermaid wits; and he was murdered, certainly by no serving-man, in a quarrel which may not have been casual and was in no evidence drunken. The old text-book

¹ *Christopher Marlowe*, by Philip Henderson (Longmans, Green & Co. 10s 6d).

historians patronized Marlowe's works and distorted, to the tune of the Puritan moralists, the few facts then known about his crowded life of twenty-nine years.

It may be of interest to examine why contemporary interest is so considerable. It is partly through accident, and partly because the temper of our own times recognizes something in Marlowe that was not apparent to the nineteenth century critic.

The accident was when, in 1925, Professor Hotson came across the name Ingram Frezer in the Public Record Office. He was aware of two versions of Marlowe's death—that he was killed by one Ingram, or that he was "slaine by Francis Archer." He knew that "Archer" had been discovered to be an ignorant misreading of ffrezer or ffrazer. He put two and two together, and after infinite pains and some good luck discovered, in the Patent Rolls of Pardons for Elizabeth's reign, a pardon to Ingram Frezer for homicide in self-defence. The trail was now hotter, and Professor Hotson himself, and other scholars, have since pieced together a much fuller, if still perplexing, picture of the poet's end. Reading it is a fascinating study in literary detection, quite as exciting as the later discovery of the *Journal* of the singularly unattractive James Boswell.

The other reason for our interest in Marlowe is that he exemplifies, in his interpretation of the tragedy of the seventeenth century, much that we can feel paralleled in the tragedy of our own time. It is always possible to find tags or situations in Shakespeare which we can relate to our own situation. But then others can also be found in Shakespeare to fit any other situation. Marlowe was far more a man of his age, both in what we know of his personal affairs and in what passions he set on paper. His was a period which like our own—seen by Professor Bronowski as "The Face of Violence"—saw savage political activity on behalf of two irreconcilable beliefs. The struggle threw up its martyrs, its valiant soldiers, its disreputable camp-followers. Appalled by the excesses on either side, many individuals struggled with problems of loyalty. Some compromised, some on either side of the curtain found themselves "traitors": some adopted a rationalist attitude (then called "atheism") despairing of themselves and of both Houses. This is a world we can only too well understand. Marlowe was a servant of Walsingham's political police, acting against the English Catholics. He was accused of

being himself secretly of the Faith. He was more specifically accused, and to the Queen, of being an atheist, and a member of the circle of the discredited Raleigh, darkly speculating—it was held but not proved—at Sherborne. He was accused of being a follower of Machiavelli—or, at all events, of the bogey-Machiavelli which the Elizabethans invented for themselves. How he really fitted into this hideous background of betrayals, cynicism, cruel belief and torturing unbelief we are never likely to know, even from another Professor Hotson. But it may not be as quite the raffish blasphemer which it has been too easy to assume. At all events it was not as a personally unhappy member of the society of happy golden Elizabethans envisaged by such writers as John Addington Symonds.

It is worth looking, quickly, at his career. Christopher Marlowe (he was afterwards called "Kit" and his name was spelt with the fascinating inconsistency of the time) was baptized at Canterbury on February 26th, 1564, two months before Shakespeare at Stratford. His father was "a shoemaker"—and a person of some municipal stature. For John Marley was a master-cobbler who ultimately became a burgess of the city, parish clerk, and had married the daughter of a clergyman. He was able to send his boy to the King's School, where he improved his classical education—he must have had some Latin already, to be admitted. Perhaps too—for recent investigation has shown that the school had a strong tradition of interest in the drama—he learnt there to love the stage. But the next year, when he was sixteen, the boy left, for on March 17th, 1581, his name appears in the University Matriculation book records as entering St. Benet's Hall, Cambridge, now Corpus Christi College. He held a Matthew Parker scholarship—one of those founded by that Archbishop for "the best and aptest scholars well instructed in their grammar and if it may be such as can make a verse." It meant that he was intended to enter the Church. In 1584 he took his B.A. degree, and his Master's degree in 1587. The whole of his early life, therefore, had been under theological influence.

Without rehearsing the references to his time at Cambridge, or which of various entries refer to him and not to either of the two other Marleys who were up at the same time, it is worth noting an important indication of what was to come, in that he

seems to have gone to the Continent on some Government mission. For in 1587 the Privy Council took the unusual step of making a special explanation to the University authorities that he had not gone to Rheims (where the Seminary for English Catholic youth now was) to remain there, but that "in all his actions he had behaved himself orderly and discreetly whereby he had done Her Majesty good service." He was clearly part of Mr. Secretary Walsingham's elaborate espionage system of *agents-provocateurs*, forgers and undercover men generally. Yet there is no knowing, if he went to Rheims, how far Marlowe found the tenets there as much to his liking as those in whose interest he was sent. There is every reason, moreover, to assume that during his time at Cambridge he learnt of the new rationalistic ideas which were one by-product of the Renaissance. He would certainly have read Machiavelli in translation. Meanwhile he found time as well to produce a popular but not very memorable translation of Ovid's elegies, and a version of Lucan's *Pharsalia*. They showed, if nothing else, at least the fire and tumult of his poetic gift—whether or not Archbishop Parker would have approved its application.

In 1587 Marlowe seems to have gone to London, perhaps taking with him the manuscript of *Tamburlaine*, his longest and for some time most popular work. This was played, in the autumn of the year, by the Admiral's men, the principal part being taken by the famous Edward Alleyn, of the loud voice and manner satirized by Shakespeare in *Hamlet*. The play was an immediate and triumphant success. It inspired a succession of historical extravaganzas on the same lines, which repeated its triumphs, and too often its actual lines—but no Elizabethan minded plagiarism—for years. It meant, in the unfolding of the story of the power-maddened Scythian demi-god, the declamation of long passages of far finer poetry than had ever been heard from the English stage. Of course there was bombast, sound and fury, and the extravagance which it was easy for later writers to ridicule, as Shakespeare did in the person of Pistol. But the sensation was enormous, and the Admiral's men had found a writer they were very willing to appreciate and to exploit. Few could resist the power of what are now the hackneyed passages—the magnificent ostentation, and the intoxicating repetition of the place-names of Baghdad, Babylon and Samarkand:

Is it not brave to be a king, Techelles?
Usumcasane and Theredimas,
Is it not passing brave to be a king,
And ride in triumph through Persepolis?

The swirl and vigour of this youthful production, the milk-white steeds laden with the heads of slain men, their hoofs dappled in blood, or the bassoes in crimson silk, with Turkish carpets for the Scythian chariot wheels, appealed to the medieval love of colour still exulting in Elizabethan England. But it represented too Marlowe's individual taste. It would be interesting to analyse his verbal spectrum—and to compare it, on another level, with for instance that of Flecker. Both ring the changes on the obvious motifs of scarlet, gold, yellow, black and crystal or white, ignoring the subtler colour gradations. Marlowe, of his age, yet more than a mere projection of it, was already a success.

By now Marlowe, as well as retaining his connection with the political underworld, had also found the circle of the University wits: young men from Oxford and Cambridge, of intelligence but usually without backing, who were seizing the opportunity offered by the emancipation of the stage from religious themes and a nomadic existence. Of course they could not entirely escape from a world still mainly concerned with religious matters. Of course, too, although the stage was no longer entirely nomadic, it was by no means entirely respectable. There attached to the dramatic profession, in all its branches, something of that social distrust with which it was still regarded by the Victorians in the nineteenth century, or which the cinema inspired in their children of the early twentieth. It was considered, and for many good reasons, to be dangerous and dissolute, and, in its less sheltered aspects, was still illegal. The Wits, however, were prepared to brave the contempt of the socially orthodox and aesthetically conservative, like Sir Philip Sidney. They flung themselves into the new medium and carried London before them—fighting, quarrelling, often collaborating, and in a number of cases ending reckless lives with violent deaths.

Marlowe was more, however, than a bombastic poet who exploited a lucky vein, polishing off his plays carelessly and without any considered theme or inner consistency. All recent research shows, in spite of the garbled versions which are often all

that we possess, a common thread, and a developing attitude throughout the plays. The important plays show—more obviously in the earlier ones, more subtly in the later—one dominating idea. This is the problem of power. Marlowe lived between the power pressures of theocracy, nationalism and—less easy to analyse at the time—new economic forces. He dramatized the problem and conflict in terms of individual power. Mass disintegration breeds despots: Lenins, Hitlers, Tudors and Tamburlaines. Marlowe treated of the despots and disposed of them. He felt the contemporary search for excess and saw its ultimate failure. He showed the glory of autocracy and its final suicide. It is possible to suggest that he was not an exhibitionist who indulged his own dreams of violent domination and then gave these a conventional and moral ending, but rather a thinker who, as the text-books would tepidly say, saw power over-reach itself—who really did share the lusts and follies and glories of dictatorship and then exploited their collapse in the madness of the dictator. If not in madness, he saw the collapse as divine recompense, the success of equally besotted rivals, or the torture of self-doubt in the self-appointed divinity. He lived these tortures, which were his own, as he wrote.

Tamburlaine is the study of a man achieving the utmost limits of authority, and the exercise of his will over millions. He dies unsatisfied, and in the delirium of despair. It is, for dramatic purposes, a lack of *personal* realization. But Elizabethan audiences were sufficiently aware of a life in which the whim of the great one affected the fortunes of his followers and of his cause. Trained on Moralities, the issue would be clearer to them than perhaps to us, in spite of faults of construction or of poetic exuberance in the dramatist. Faustus is a man who calls in the very aid of the supernatural to obtain absolute spiritual power, but for whom again the power is never realized, and whose immortality is forfeit to Hell as a result. Barabbas the Jew is a man intoxicated by the idea of power through wealth: he becomes the subject of tragedy. It is, throughout, the same quest of unsatisfied ambition, and the same retribution. If the problem of his protagonists was Marlowe's personal problem, it was also consciously symbolic of his time.

Chronologically, *The Jew of Malta* came closely on the heels of *Tamburlaine*. It seems to have been written in 1591. The pro-

logue is spoken by the ghost of Machiavelli, in his most caricatured vein:

I count religion but a childish toy,
And hold there is no sin but ignorance

which for some reason is held to be Marlowe himself speaking. As Machiavelli's protégé is boiled to death at the end of the play and is consciously antipathetic throughout, this seems rather simple reasoning. No doubt Marlowe enjoyed creating a puppet to shock the conventional; there is no less reason to suppose that he was pleased to create a symbolic figure, moralistically to destroy.

Shakespeare copied *The Jew* in Shylock, as he copied *Edward II* in *Richard II*. The play ranks, in spite of the dubious text, as one of Marlowe's five great ones, with its resolution of purpose, climax of tragedy, and flowing rhetoric of expression. Mr. T. S. Eliot sees it as an expression of the old English farce—a broad Morality play.

Dr. Faustus was written in 1592. It is in some ways the greatest of the plays. The legend of a man who sold his soul to the Devil appears popularly about the sixth century, and was by this time concentrated round a rather second-rate necromancer called Dr. Faustus, a magician of Erfurt in the early sixteenth century. The theme was popular everywhere (Dr. E. M. Butler has explored it most usefully) and has been exploited in literature from the extremes of Calderon to Goethe. Marlowe was early to dramatize it in England. Superficially he followed the traditional story of Faust's progressive damnation, but his characterization is as full, and his sense of the symbolism of magic as deep, as Goethe's. The extant version contains plenty of buffoonery by a sorcerer's apprentice called Wagner, as well. But the picture of Faustus' supreme experiment is terrific—not just something transposed from the chap-books.

It is not necessary to describe the rest of Marlowe's works in detail. The plays of *Power*, *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Faustus*, are succeeded by the plays of *Policy*, which work out the theme further. These are *The Massacre at Paris* and *The Tragedy of Dido*, *Queen of Carthage*. Bridging the two comes, in 1592, *The Tragedy of Edward II*, the most popular work to-day, outcropping indeed into formal examination papers. The story

is uneven, and the work of condensing a reign of twenty-three years into a few successive scenes, of which the first third deal with the affairs of the favourite Gaveston (who in fact only shone for the five years from 1307 to 1312) is too much. Perhaps, as the more romantically minded critics suggest, the devil-may-care, ironical, homosexual Gaveston represents the poet. At all events the doting young king becomes the "old Edward" of the end of the play far too rapidly. But the power is there, and the incidental poetry, because condensed, is the more effective. It almost excuses the eulogies of Swinburne, or Lamb's opinion that "the death scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene, ancient or modern, with which I am acquainted." I can only confirm that when, as a schoolmaster, I used to coach little boys in stock scenes from the Elizabethans, this was a greater favourite for acting than anything I could find from Shakespeare—certainly than from the much more complex *Richard II*.

The Plays of Policy were completed with the help of Nashe. *The Massacre at Paris*, started earlier, was presented in 1596. Our only version is from a corrupt theatrical prompt book. It was topical stuff, and may have been an undeveloped theme re-issued in patriotic form to counter suggestions that Marlowe was a Catholic. It deals with the Duke of Guise, popularly regarded as the reincarnation of Machiavelli, and the "Massacre of St. Bartholomew." It is chiefly remarkable for the weight-lifting feats of the extras, whose constant stage direction is to "remove the bodies," which pepper the stage with an almost cinematic abandon. *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage*, was produced in 1594, again after collaboration with Nashe, although it may have been begun as one of the earlier works. It is clearly written with a company of boy actors in view, and is, paradoxically, the only play in which normal sexual love is the main motive-force of the action. Perhaps it was again for insurance, against other charges, that it was vamped out at the end of the poet's career. In addition to all this Marlowe probably had a hand in the writing of a collaboratory snippet *The True Tragedy of Richard of York*, and from internal evidence perhaps also wrote much (the critics make play of it to taste) of the *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI* mainly attributed to Shakespeare. Also he produced the first two cantos of the supremely beautiful poem *Hero and Leander*, finished by Chapman, and other lyrics of which only one and a half

certainly survive. How his gifts would have developed it is idle to pretend. He died young, but not intellectually exhausted.

This is not the place to analyse the plays as drama or as poetry. As has been said, the work is being increasingly done, and Marlowe's reputation grows. The immaturity is recognizable, and so is the occasionally faulty construction. But the fault of carelessness it is now less easy to press. What is evident is that Marlowe was an intellectual revolutionary. This was always recognized. It is also evident that he was a thinker who reflected his age, and not merely reacted from it. He belonged to circles which would still be regarded as "advanced" to-day—unassured of eternal verities, but vigorous, not apathetically complacent to any creed or anti-creed. He was involved in personal brawls, and imprisoned at Newgate as a result; he was also involved in philosophical speculation which opened him to criticism, for heresy and apostasy—by men themselves on trial for those very things, and in fear of torture. An enquiry was hanging over his head at the time of his murder. The truth we shall probably never know. It is, however, worth mentioning again the problem of his death.

The tragedy of genius cut off in its prime has always attracted historical romancers, and fancy-dress novelists have made profitable hay with Marlowe's violent death. Yet even apart from professed romanticists, the most incredible stories have been believed. They are so incredible that neither of the two latest biographers, Professor Poirier or Philip Henderson, bother to mention them. The Reverend William Theobald, for example, writing at Budleigh Salterton in 1895, claimed to prove that Marlowe's works were written by the indefatigable Francis Bacon. But this was as nothing to the theory matured three years later by Mr. W. G. Zeigler, that Marlowe murdered one Frazer, and wrote works (under Frazer's name) until he was in turn murdered by Ben Johnson in 1598. Other sober authorities attributed Marlowe's death to plague, poison, poignards or passion, in streets or houses, Deptford or London, according to their own rich fancy.

The first generally accepted account of the poet's end was that of the Puritan moralist Thomas Beard, writing in 1597. He, in a compilation called the *Theatre of God's Judgment*, stated that, after a quarrel in "London Streetes," Marlowe, a creature of infinite villainy, was killed by his own dagger, aimed at a bawdy

serving-man, unnamed. This legend, elaborated in an even more impressively named work *The Thunderbolt of God's Wrath against Hard Hearted and Stiffe Necked Sinners*, was repeated until 1820, with the variant that the death took place at Deptford, at the hand of Ingram. Professor Hotson's discovery of 1925 has already been described.

The story revealed by Hotson's researches, and subsequent ones, is this. Marlowe came to the house of Mistress Bull at Deptford early on May 30th, 1593, with three companions. They booked a room, and stayed there "in quiet sort"—i.e. not carousing—for eight hours. At the end of the time a quarrel arose about the reckoning. Marlowe, who was reclining on a bed by the wall, attacked, with the blunt end of his poignard, Ingram Frezer, who was sitting upright at the table between the two others. In self-defence Frezer (the others not apparently interfering) drove the dagger back so that it entered Marlowe's head, making a mortal wound of the length of two inches and of the depth of a quarter of an inch. Marlowe died. The jury accepted this story, and Frezer was pardoned. It all seemed clear enough.

More recent investigations have thrown doubt on the finding. We know the careers of the three other men, Poley, Sheres and Frezer, and so we know far more than the jury did. All were rogues, and all were in one way or another paid spies. All came to dubious ends. Poley, in particular, was an assassin—a type of Lightborne in *Edward II*. Marlowe had been employed on secret service work. He was about to appear before the Privy Council. Was he disposed of by the Council out of court? Was he disposed of by the other three plotters because he could have compromised them? Was he put out of the way by Raleigh, whom he might have incriminated? All these theories, and others, have backing. Mr. Henderson sadly feels that it may have been a quarrel about the bill, after all. But the whole story is a fascinating one. The only fact is that Marlowe was killed in Mistress Bull's hostelry at Deptford on that early summer's day in 1593. Oddly enough, a few months afterwards the plague became so bad that all the theatres were closed by the authorities. As a convenient chapter ending for the text books, Marlowe lay dead, and with him the first stage in English dramatic history.

His death was typical of his reputation, but has little perhaps to do with his work or his opinions. I suggest, however, that

these opinions have, because of the testimony of men pleading special cases, been perhaps too easily accepted as they were quoted—as the bravado of an inspired religious anarchist. Marlowe no doubt went through many of the emotions he put into the mouths of his characters. Yet he may have shared the sense of their tragedy, as well. Mr. T. S. Eliot has called him—almost in an aside—"the most thoughtful, the most blasphemous (and therefore, probably, the most Christian) of his contemporaries. . . ."

It is a line of thought which might be worth further consideration by the next biographer. In times of torment an artist may seek to provide catharsis. We, living in torment, should be the first to understand.

ASPECTS OF ENGLISH RELIGION¹

By

HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON

"IT IS TRULY SAID that to become bitter in controversy is more heretical than to espouse with sincerity and charity the most devastating theological opinions . . ." So wrote William Temple, then Archbishop of York, in his introduction to the report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine. If this judgment cannot be said to be one which has been very clearly thought out it is at least an indication of the drift of Anglican theological opinion. In the days when Father Faber's friends could speak of the Church of England as "old mother damnable," courtesies in controversy might easily be regarded as evidence of lukewarmness of faith, and deplorable as the tone of Catholic controversialists so often was, it was at least an admission of the fact that

¹ *The Anglican Dilemma*, by the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Slessor, P.C. (Hutchinson 12s 6d).

The Development of English Theology in the later Nineteenth Century, by L. E. Elliott-Binns, D.D. (Longmans 8s 6d).

Religion in Britain since 1900, by G. Stephens Spinks (Andrew Dakers 18s).

they did believe that the questions at issue were things which really mattered. At length a little group of Catholics, Canon William Barry, Mr. Wilfrid Ward and Mr. W. S. Lilley sought to cultivate a more eirenic attitude towards Anglicans but with slight effect. Some impression was, however, made on the Anglican episcopate by the publication shortly before the meeting, in 1920, of the sixth Lambeth Conference of Father Leslie Walker's book *The Problem of Reunion*, which was given a friendly notice in the report of one of the sub-committees. "A few years ago," said the report, "there would have been no 'problem' and though the writer maintains the traditional Roman position, he shows a marked difference in tone and temperament from what we have been accustomed to." Father Leslie Walker viewed the Church of England as an institution calling for careful and even sympathetic study, but other tendencies were to be met with in the English Catholic body, tendencies demanding a more directly polemical attitude and not always shrinking from ridicule. At length came the Second World War and the short-lived era of "Christian Co-operation." While it lasted English Catholics enjoyed a degree of goodwill such as they had not known since the Reformation. This in a considerable measure still continues, but instances of co-operation are now few if, indeed, any occur at all. The Second World War inaugurated a kind of controversial truce. Even the pugnacious Dr. Coulton was dissuaded by Bishop Hensley Henson, of all people, from making an attack on the Papacy, while among Catholics many seemed to feel that indulgence in anti-Anglican or even anti-Protestant polemic was now of very questionable taste. Christian co-operation petered out, but the informal truce in matters of controversy was not immediately broken. Even the Anglican protest against the definition of the doctrine of the Assumption was couched in studiously moderate terms. This atmosphere of unwonted calm has now been disturbed by a clap of thunder. Sir Henry Slessor, a former Solicitor-General and Lord Justice of Appeal, who is understood to be a recent convert to Catholicism, has now launched a frontal attack on the Church of England, though whether it betokens a general resumption of hostilities cannot yet be known. It should be said at once that Sir Henry knows more about the Church of England than did most Catholic controversialists of the past. His judgments, if severe, are delivered without rancour. What surprises one

most is how anyone holding the author's opinions should have remained for so long a member of the Church of England. *The Anglican Dilemma*, a sketch of the four centuries of Anglican history, is directed mainly against the Anglo-Catholic position, and the dilemma in which the Anglo-Catholic is placed is, so Sir Henry forcefully argues, that of clinging to a position which historical evidence has undermined, or that of entering into communion with Rome. In no case can the Anglo-Catholic go on as he is. In Sir Henry's view the Church of England came into existence in November 1534 as a result of the Act of Supremacy. It would be more true to say that "a Church of England" was brought into being by this Act, but not the Church of England which exists today. Had there been no further changes England would have had a schismatic Church, but not a Protestant one. Anglicanism as we know it was born of the reforms of Edward VI and Elizabeth. Sir Henry drives home the Erastian character of the Elizabethan religious settlement for the benefit of his former co-religionists, but is he quite accurate when he says that it was decided in James I's time that even such Canon Law as was allowed (that not repugnant to the law of the land) was not binding on the laity unless confirmed by Parliament? For in 1736 in a judgment given in the case of *Middleton v. Crofts* Lord Hardwicke ruled that the Canons of 1603 did bind the laity in so far as they were "declaratory of ancient usage and law of the Church of England. . . ." Sir Henry emphasizes how far removed was the churchmanship of Laud from that proclaimed by the Tractarians who could only justify themselves by reading back into the seventeenth century something which was not there. "The disciples of Laud accepted without qualification the principle of the Divine Right of Kings . . . albeit the King did not claim to exercise sacerdotal functions." A high churchman might indeed accord to the sovereign some limited measure of authority in Church matters on the ground that the Church had anointed him, but it was a different matter when the powers of the Crown came to be exercised by Ministers and Parliament. When the Irish bishoprics were suppressed the Tractarian leaders did not call for disestablishment as a means of winning freedom for the national Church, but it is fair to remember that neither did the Catholic bishops in Germany call for disestablishment as a means of freeing the Church from Josephist and Febronian influences. The

Tractarian leaders never faced the dilemma which compelled them to choose between acceptance of State supremacy and disestablishment. Neither did the 7,000 clergy and 230,000 heads of families who signed the petition presented to Archbishop Howley.

"As a demonstration of churchmanship," says Sir Henry, "the manifestoes may have been heartening, but in the absence of any proposals to emancipate the Church of England from State control it was nugatory." It was not till Frederick Temple's appointment to Exeter nearly forty years later that some High Churchmen became reluctantly convinced that disestablishment might be the only remedy for Erastianism.

In his treatment of the last hundred years Sir Henry Slessor displays a keen interest in many aspects of Anglican life and history, but though the growth of theological liberalism is alluded to and Colenso, Voysey and Sir John Seeley are cursorily mentioned, no summary of their opinions is given nor, what is more important, is there any analysis of the factors which facilitated the spread of "Modernism." Such names as those of Sanday, Rashdall, Cheyne and even J. M. Thompson are absent from these pages. Intellectually Sir Henry Slessor seems inclined to depreciate the Anglican clergy. He tells us of their impotence when the *Origin of Species* appeared, but were they more impotent than were the Catholic clergy when the *Vie de Jésus* was published? Sir Henry has nothing to say of the great Cambridge school which flourished when Catholic Biblical studies were at a low ebb, though he does pay some tribute to Anglican work in the social field. The author concludes with the reflection that the leaders of the Anglican Church have miscalculated the value of "pragmatic hesitancy and want of clarity" and that "at long last, ambiguity will no longer be found to afford an abiding foundation whether in faith or in reason."

Sir Henry Slessor is keenly sensitive where faulty logic is to be met with, but he gives the impression of having been little troubled, perhaps never troubled, by intellectual difficulties in the matter of religion. Dr. Elliott-Binns has a mind shaped in a different mould. He has perhaps never been disconcerted by the possibility that he was holding a proposition which he would prefer not to subject to a rigorous test in logic, while he has lived among men and books concerned with intellectual ques-

tionings in matters of faith. His *Development of English Theology in the later Nineteenth Century* deals with not four hundred, but with only forty years. Dr. Elliott-Binns begins his historical sketch with an event of which few of us have probably realized the religious significance, the repeal of the paper duty in 1860, by which the number of newspaper and magazine readers was greatly increased. Popular and semi-popular attacks on, and the defences of Christianity multiplied. When John Morley edited the *Fortnightly Review* almost every number contained an attack on orthodox Christianity. His editorship began at a time when its truth was for the average believer more closely bound up with the narratives of the sun standing still, or Balaam's ass or of Jonah's whale than is the case today. Dr. Elliott-Binns believes that Buckle's *History of Civilization* had a more unsettling effect on religious belief than the *Origin of Species*, which last was indeed made use of for defending Christianity as well as for attacking it. For appeal could be made to natural selection "to meet the criticism that the choice of the Jewish people as recipients of special divine favour was unjust to other nations." Philosophy and theology did not go "hand in hand" in England as in Germany, and England in 1860 had to wait thirty years till the *Lux Mundi* group came forward with a theology which possessed a philosophical basis. Of the *Lux Mundi* philosophers the most popular was J. R. Illingworth, whose books were translated into Chinese and Japanese. But the average believer was not a philosopher and for him more burning questions were raised by the resemblances between Christianity and other religions, to which attention was being drawn by scholars, as well as by the higher criticism of the Bible.

It is interesting to be told in this connection that the Ritschlians in Germany viewed the study of comparative religion with coldness. Even Harnack held that this science could contribute nothing to theology though it "might be profitably studied in connection with history and philosophy" (p. 55). If there is any modern nation which deserves the name of "the people of the book" it is the British, and inevitably the history of the changes in the British attitude to religion during the last hundred years can only be appreciated in connection with changing views about the Bible.

The last forty years of the century registered an intellectual revolution. Pusey's defence of the traditional view of Daniel at

the beginning of it and Cheyne's *Encyclopaedia Biblica* at the close of the period give us some notion of the nature of its extent. In the 1860's there was a considerable output of apologetic in defence of traditional views, much by writers whose qualifications were dubious. "Their works brought assurance to the unlearned, who often did not realize the large concessions which were made to the critical position even when it was rejected as a whole" (p. 72). Such a position was that of Professor Sayce, and at a later date that of Dr. James Orr. In the closing years of the century Anglicans were divided on the Biblical question. Of Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort who occupied professorial chairs at Cambridge between 1861 and 1892 Hastings Rashdall, an advanced liberal, said that they "raised English theology . . . from a condition of intellectual nullity up to the level of the best German work . . ." (p. 59). The views of the moderate wing of English Biblical scholarship are to be seen in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*; those of the more advanced wing which held opinions better represented on the Continent can be seen in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*. The traditional authorship of the Fourth Gospel, defended by the Cambridge school, was again a subject for debate when the century closed, but there was a general agreement that Mark was the earliest gospel and a disposition to date it c. A.D. 65-70. There was no unison with regard to the dates of the other two Synoptics. English scholars were inclined to regard II Peter, and perhaps Jude, as the only epistles which were genuinely pseudepigraphical.

In the matter of textual criticism, no discovery as sensational as that of Tischendorf's finding of the Codex Sinaiticus in 1859 was made, but Westcott and Hort made good use of the materials collected by other scholars and in 1870 the Canterbury Convocation appointed a commission, which included non-Anglicans, to revise the Authorized Version. The New Testament appeared in 1881, the Old Testament four years later, and the so-called "Apocrypha" in 1895. The new version failed to give universal satisfaction and Armitage Robinson said of it that it was one of the tragedies of scholarship that it was made a generation too soon. In the field of patristic study knowledge of the Greek Fathers which had been characteristic of the Caroline divines had ceased to be cultivated and owed its revival in part at least to F. D. Maurice.

In dogmatic theology the decline of belief in eternal punishment during the period under review was probably the change whose effects were most felt. As far back as 1853 Maurice criticized the current concepts of this doctrine, but the controversy reached its acutest stage with the appearance of Farrer's *Eternal Hope* in 1878. "Criticism of the doctrine of endless punishment," says Dr. Elliott-Binns, "undoubtedly robbed the preacher of a potent weapon, and also had no small part in encouraging lax views about sin. Like so many reactions it was carried too far, and men, forgetting Christ's own warnings as to future retribution, came to look upon God as too good-natured to inflict any punishment at all" (p. 105). The century closed with a conviction among intellectual men that dogma was a thing of the past. In his Gifford Lectures on the *Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James of Harvard said: "We must bid a definite good-bye to dogmatic theology. In all sincerity our faith must do without this warrant." The century ended on a note of optimism. Men believed that the Cambridge school had said the last word on the New Testament and Bishop Creighton wrote in 1896: "For my part I believe that the attack on Christianity is intellectually repulsed."

Religion in Britain since 1900 forms a sequel to Dr. Elliott-Binns's book, while including a survey of the progress or lack of progress in the story of other religious bodies during the last fifty years.¹ Dr. Spinks, the principal author, has enjoyed the collaboration of Dr. E. L. Allen and the Rev. James Parkes who are responsible for considerable portions of the book. The theological position of all three writers seems to be that of a fairly advanced liberalism but they generally write temperately of other points of view. At the beginning of this period there were many suggestions to support Creighton's belief that the intellectual attack on Christianity would not be repeated in a serious form. The star of the Tübingen school of Biblical criticism had set and that of the Cambridge one had arisen. The Anglican hierarchy contained a large number of intellectually gifted men. There was, however, no real respite and the attack on traditional

¹ A few small errors may be noted in this book. The population of Scotland was well over two millions in 1843 and not 800,000 as stated on p. 42. George Tyrrell died in 1909 and not 1908 as stated on p. 56. John Mason Neale died in 1866 not 1888 (p. 136).

Christianity, whether directed from the standpoint of Rationalism or that of "Modernism" was ceaselessly maintained. The Rationalist Press Association enjoyed its heyday in the Edwardian period. The subsequent adoption by a large number of clergymen and ministers of so many of the positions for which it contended has since taken the wind out of its sails. The most sensational, if not the most scholarly, assault from the Liberal or Modernist side came from the "New Theology" preached by R. J. Campbell at the City Temple. Campbell did what would have been beyond the powers of Rashdall, Sanday or Inge. He produced a work of modernist theology which "was debated, not only in denominational assemblies, but in the public-house and the hairdresser's shop." But the author himself came to find that he had "allowed immanentism to run mad in this book." Gore's reply to him, *The Old Theology and the New Religion*, led him to relinquish his position and convinced by Baron von Hügel's writings of the importance of the institutional element in religion he returned to the Church of England where the budding anti-Christ was transformed into a staid Canon of Chichester Cathedral. In the chapter "On the Stirring in the Universities" Dr. James Parkes tells the story of the rise of the Student Christian Movement, perhaps the most enduring legacy of Protestant organization during the early years of the century. "In London and Edinburgh, in Cambridge and Oxford . . . small groups of evangelically minded students had been meeting for prayer and Bible reading for some decades." Some had attended the annual Keswick Conventions. Visits to England of the American revivalist Dwight L. Moody laid the foundations of an activity which was to become world-wide. The first impulse which swayed the Student Christian Movement was a missionary one which bore fruit in the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. Soon the Movement attracted Liberals and Anglo-Catholics, a phase which caused some heart-burning to the original Evangelical core. However, the various elements were fused and shortly before the First World War permanent headquarters were acquired in Derbyshire. The war seemed a shattering blow to a movement possessed of so much idealism, but the S.C.M. survived, though its character was somewhat changed. "It was no longer," says Dr. Parkes, "interested only in personal religion. . . . Many of its student members . . . thought that the building of a new world through

the League of Nations was a more urgent task than that of evangelism." Much more recently there has begun to be felt a movement in the opposite direction, a movement owing some of its impetus to Barth. The inter-war years were a period of intense activity so far as organization was concerned, but no achievements were reached in any way comparable to the amount of energy expended. On all hands there seemed to be a refusal to face basic issues. On the whole, although religion was less attacked in the England of the inter-war period than in the pre-war one, there was probably less of it. Some persons believed that it had been weakened by the ultra-patriotic attitude taken by ministers of all denominations during the war. At the present day we are told an Anglican clergyman can congratulate himself if in a parish of twenty thousand he can count on a congregation of four hundred. North of the Border, however, religion gives the appearance of possessing greater vitality. The Church of Scotland in a population of five millions claims a membership of a million and a quarter and if we add to this the Catholics, Episcopalians and dissident Presbyterians we shall have a church membership of two millions. When the Second World War came it was apparent that the lessons of the first one had been almost entirely lost. A much more tolerant attitude towards conscientious objection to military service prevailed, but in other directions the old illusions were still to be met with. Religious men started to plan for an ideal society which was to come into being after the war was over before they knew what would be left to them to rebuild with. In one important respect, however, there was a remarkable difference between the religious situation in England in 1918 and that of 1945. At the former date few persons in academic circles in this country thought of the Catholic Church as a force to be any longer reckoned with on the intellectual plane. Indeed it had hardly been considered as such since the days of the Oxford conversions. Acton in 1860 had complained that he was faced with illiterate bishops, ignorant priests and prejudiced laymen, and even among those who would have considered this judgment to err on the side of severity, the belief that the Reformed Churches were better fitted than the Church of Rome to cope with modern intellectual problems prevailed. In the seventies and eighties of the last century, though Newman was regarded as a venerable figure, his theology was considered

to be that of an epoch which had long ago passed away. The non-Catholic world was more divided in its attitude to Manning. A part of it saw in him a clever and not too scrupulous intriguer. Another regarded him at least in the last decade of his life as a champion of liberal causes in a way which put to shame the prelates of the Establishment. But Manning was never an intellectual force. In the year 1900 the Church of Rome seemed to many, probably to most, cultivated Englishmen to be held in the grip of slow but fatal disease. But almost immediately there came a change though it was but a brief one. Persons interested in these matters began to acquire a familiarity with three names, the Abbé Loisy, Father Tyrrell and Baron Friedrich von Hügel. These men put forward a defence of Catholicism, or of what they claimed to be Catholicism, different from that which Englishmen were accustomed to, and men who had thought that the Church was dying asked themselves whether it was not after all perhaps going to be rejuvenated. But Modernism was condemned. Loisy and Tyrrell were excommunicated and von Hügel was under a black cloud. Rome, it was thought, had turned her back on modern civilization and on intellectual progress. The anti-modernist oath and the decree of a Biblical Commission were cited as evidence of this. "The Biblical Commission," writes Dr. E. L. Allen, in his chapter on the "Acids of Modernity," "was reconstituted with a membership competent to guarantee its stubborn obscurantism. Did Rome by any chance foresee what was coming? Did it guess that the day was not far distant when many would rally-to it precisely because it so obstinately refused to come to terms with the modern mind?" The decrees of the much-abused Biblical Commission if carefully studied are seen to be for the most part less conservative than a hurried perusal would seem to imply and the English Catholic apologists for the Papacy would have acted more wisely if they had stressed this point instead of tending to treat their narrowest interpretation as the only possible one. But it would perhaps be expecting too much of Dr. Allen to ask him to read carefully through a Roman decree three times for the purpose of ascertaining its exact meaning. The small measure of progress which Rome has made in this country since the condemnation of Modernism has been in no slight degree due to the fact that many have come to believe that whereas she was seeking to

discriminate between what is good and what is evil in the modern mind, the leaders of the non-Roman churches have been but all too ready to pay homage to what was "modern" largely because it was so and without sufficient effort to measure its real values. If Rome did attract a small number of cultivated persons during the inter-war period, but little impression was made on the masses. Fear of the Communist government of Russia during the nineteen-twenties and of the Anti-Communist Government of Germany during the nineteen-thirties certainly lessened the traditional suspicion of Catholicism in England. But it was not till the period of the Second World War that a note of cordiality entered into interdenominational relations so far as Catholics and Protestants were concerned. In spite, however, of some impressive beginnings and the eloquence and enthusiasm of Miss Barbara Ward, Christian Co-operation proved to be a sickly plant. Protestants understandably felt that there was a certain unreality in the Catholic expression of desire for co-operation unless it was associated with joint prayer, and on this question English Catholics were divided. Dr. James Parkes expresses an unhopeful verdict on co-operation between Catholics and Protestants arguing that "the conditions under which Roman Catholics may co-operate with other Christians in joint work are so unacceptable that they appear unlikely to lead to any real advance in this field." The flames of an old controversy may also, so it seems, be at no distant date rekindled. For Dr. Spinks tells us in a footnote that "the attempt of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to make education an election issue in 1950 was resented by Free Churchmen and Anglicans alike." But even co-operation between the Protestant Churches gave to some a sense of emptiness. "Men increasingly felt," says Dr. Parkes, "the need to reject the view which allowed them to meet and take counsel and act together in the name of a common Christian faith while at the central act of Christian worship—the Communion Service—they had to be separated." The Ecumenical Movement has so far been unable to overcome this difficulty, and the Amsterdam meeting felt unable to hold a united Communion service.

In his chapter on the "Religions of Modern Britain," Dr. Spinks offers us a timely reminder of the fact that the study of religion in England and still more in the Empire and Commonwealth, does more than involve the student in a study of

Christian denominations. In an account of the religions of modern Britain something even more than a cursory reference to Theosophy, Christian Science, Spiritualism, the Oxford Group and Jehovah's Witnesses is needed. Not only Judaism, but the great historic faiths of Asia, are, as Lord Samuel reminded a conference at University College, London, in 1936, now represented among us. This reflection may well cause our imaginations to travel forward and make us ask ourselves what will be the state of religion in Britain in A.D. 2000. Some disillusionment may be in store both for Britain's Protestant majority and for her Catholic minority. The Liberal theologian has a bitter lesson to learn. The proud self-confident liberalism which looked so pityingly on Pius X when he condemned Modernism can never be assimilated by the average man. Liberalism may destroy men's belief in one set of dogmas but is powerless to destroy belief in dogma. All Protestants have to learn that comprehensiveness may be a source of weakness as well as of strength, and Catholics if they are wise will strive to moderate their haste to write the epitaphs of the Protestant Churches.

AUGUSTUS WELBY PUGIN

1812—1852

By

EDMUND ESDAILE

“CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE and a boat”—these engaged all Pugin's faculties. Christian architecture, narrowed to a single style, included everything from a groundplan to extrinsic adornments; the boat implied the mastery by man of his second element, the sea. Pugin's professional life virtually began at fourteen, and continued until his death at forty, when his mind sank exhausted, and his body capitulated to the demands

made upon it from precocious boyhood by a concentration of all his powers.

His early training was unusual and brief, and not of itself directed to the profession of architecture. Delicate, and therefore a day-boy at Christ's Hospital, he picked up a love of things chivalric from reading at home, and a knowledge of ornament from his father, an easy-going *émigré* draughtsman who helped John Nash. He was himself apt with a pencil, and had much opportunity to practise; at fourteen he and Benjamin Ferrey, two years his senior, investigated and measured Rochester Castle when Cottingham was at work on the Cathedral, and at fifteen he designed Gothic furniture for Windsor, both considerable feats at his age. He also had experience of the theatre, for he helped with scene-painting and the machinery of the stage, with which his first wife's family was connected (he was married three times and twice left a widower in his short life). His passion for the sea also developed early; and either of these might have proved his profession. His powers of advocacy and prosecution fitted him for the bar. He might have been equally a literary satirist, an historian, an archaeologist, a painter, or an illustrator. He became an architect. At the age of twenty-one, already a widower (his first wife having died in childbed), already having been imprisoned for debt and released, he married a second time. His parents were both recently dead, and he was independent. Having long mastered the details and the function of details in medieval Gothic churches, he contrasted what he saw of medieval architecture with what he saw in his own day, and he became a Catholic. Half a dozen potential careers and much of a normal man's lifetime of intellectual and other activity lay behind him when he was not more than twenty-three.¹ Before him still lay his lifework as a reviver of Gothic architecture in the medieval spirit, and as an architectural author.

It is his first books (1835-6), which include the celebrated and satirical *Contrasts*, and his employment by Barry for the detailed drawings of the new Houses of Parliament, which gives him precedence over Sir George Gilbert Scott as the director of the Gothic Revival. Scott in fact was a year his senior, and hardly

¹ The year of his reception was 1834 or 1835: it seems uncertain which. No one who has not himself been accepted as an expert at sixteen can understand Pugin's experience.

less precocious with pencil and sketch-book and in Gothic predilections than Pugin himself. But Scott was receiving the long training of an architect; he lacked Pugin's intellectual fire and versatility; nor did Pugin, as Scott did, ever compromise his mind by indulging in classical buildings. Scott restored the old, as Pugin did not live to do. Perhaps Pugin was too creative to wish to do so, and as a Catholic he could not have had the same opportunities. As for Ruskin, he was junior to Pugin by seven and to Scott by eight years. As an originator, despite his importance, he cannot claim pride of place.

But Pugin's self-appointed task was beset with difficulties. First, until the reign of George II building and sculpture were rarely divorced in practice. The mason built what he designed; he carved and lettered. Baroque, the architectural language of the counter-Reformation, affected England late and little. Wren's "auditory churches," open (his screens are excessively rare) with short chancels and galleried, were designed, as Wren himself made abundantly clear in writing, for sermons, Anglican usage, and the Book of Common Prayer. However brilliant and ingenious their plans, they are governed by this principle. The impress of Baroque is to be seen in his stone steeples, of which many survive, and in lead-covered steeples and cupolas, most of which, alas, do not. Had Wren been allowed his way, his favourite design for St. Paul's, wholly Baroque in conception, might today be ours. Earlier, the Palladian purity of Inigo Jones had rescued England from the chaotic Dutch pattern-books; for Henry VIII had driven from England Italians like Torrigiano; but under Elizabeth foreign Protestant refugees found a home here. The gilds had been rifled, like the monasteries and the Universities. Elizabeth liked order: she restored the Universities, regulated the poor, and organized the system of apprenticeship—all in some shape, if a new one.

Thus the gilds, which had lost their religious function, retained this at least: a curriculum which led to a career, from apprentice to master-man and "freeman," i.e. burgess, "free" to trade with the "liberties" of a borough. This *cursus honorum* of local government survived, and with it the protective, or, to later minds, restrictive practices of a borough government (or corporation) not very different from the medieval pattern. The mason retained from pre-Reformation times his training and its civic setting; but

he lost religion and the innate power to develop design. Gothic, for example, continued here and there—fan-vaults in Oxford until the reign of George I; Lancaster Church tower in that of George II; but Gothic marked time, it did not march. So, too, the late Tudor design of stone cottages from Chipping Norton to the Soke of Peterborough hardly varies throughout the seventeenth century—an occasional ornamented door alone may depart from the norm; but there is the same impression of marking time, as any traveller can see. Mr. A. S. Ireson, of Stamford, a master builder in the old tradition,¹ competent to exercise his traditional threefold craft of design, building, and carving in stone, has assured me that the mason will still instinctively turn to the style, late sixteenth-century in origin, loosely called "Cotswold." This can only imply an atrophy, now four hundred years old, of the builder's creative mind—that the system of apprenticeship and burges continued, but not the creativity. The builders obeyed Inigo Jones, Wren, Gibbs, and an imitative classic graciousness with local idioms resulted. They could produce *chinoiserie*, rococo, and the Gothic touch with equal but imitative skill. Yet in Pugin's day many more quarries were actively worked than now, and all employed trained craftsmen, although many craftsmen were not mastermen themselves. Such local craftsmen, and mastermen, too, were Pugin's friends Osmond of Salisbury and Myers of Beverley: but neither of Pugin's parents could interpret this aspect of the social history of the England which he so passionately loved.

That he so loved England was due more to his dominant English mother, surely, than to the welcome given in England to his *émigré* but recessive father. Pugin's love of England cannot be minimized, and in this his mother's force is, I think, in part to be recognized. Her family was one of squires, deep-rooted; and a sense of deep roots is healthy. But it was also Protestant. "What, marry a Roman Catholic?" he had fiercely protested once, about the mention of his name conjoined with that of Mlle. Lafitte. He had known at Islington (his mother's home) the graceful eighteenth century cupola and spire pierced with oval lights; but its interior lacked the touch of Wren. He was schooled in Wren's Christ's Hospital, and daily familiar with Christ Church, Newgate Street, specially galleried to accommo-

¹ For whom, see H. J. Massingham, *Where Man Belongs*.

date the boys—an “auditory church.” Some eyeless vandal removed the urns which once graced and softened the spire, which deserves special mention. Its base is formed by square *tempietti*, not by a curved cupola or an interplay of convex and concave. Among Wren’s spires it is uniquely created from rectangles; and this is the spire which was daily—not Sunday by Sunday—familiar to Pugin’s boyish eye. He could have passed few others, if any, on his daily journeys to and from school. Add to this the auditory church planned for sermons, worse later imitations, as at Islington, of Wren’s plan, medieval churches adapted for sermons, and crown the whole with the sermons of Edward Irving: contrast this background with chivalry and neglected medieval details unused in churches, and one begins to see why Pugin never realized that the Baroque and “open” churches as favoured by the Oratorians could be Christian; why he saw through and hated shams, and why he despised that part of his heritage, which ran through Sir Walter Scott straight back to Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill.

In rejecting Horace Walpole, Pugin was one-sided, and his one-sidedness calls for comment. The violence of his reactions to his mother, combined with his unreason about screens, are not inconsistent with a strong affinity between mother and son. But unreason was not typical of Pugin: he was certainly one-sided in his medievalism, but he was not usually irrational, and his satiric gift and his love of boats were correctives. In his powers of advocacy and prosecution we may well trace the influence of his mother’s father, a barrister. But he went further than pleading a cause; he wrestled with immediate, elemental truth. Thus, educated in Wren’s buildings, he yet seems scarcely to have suspected that Wren’s masons, too, had been no less than Osmond his “fellow craft” [smen], whom he adjured to “leave his blisters”¹ and “Doric porticoes”: that William Stanton, for example, Wren’s master-mason for St. Andrew’s, Holborn, commemorated the Shireburnes of Stonyhurst at Mitton, and must have designed as well as built the almshouses there. Yet Pugin worked at Scarisbrick, in the same county; and it is not impossible that he may have visited Denton, the Welby seat near Grantham—duly instructed by his mother, who obviously had family pride in giving him as baptismal names two, Welby and Northmore,

¹ i.e., monumental tablets.

derived from her family. In Queen Anne's reign another unsuspected "fellow" mason (Thomas Green of Camberwell) had commemorated Richard Welby (d. 1713) with a standing statue in full contemporary dress and wig, upon which cherubs, carved with much *bravura*, fly down to place a crown of immortality. One can imagine the boy bewildered and perhaps shuddering at the statue, yet, with his native curiosity, noting on the inscription this sentence, "The Poor lost in him a liberal and silent Benefactor." The wording happens to be unusual and precisely chosen, in particular the adjective "silent." To say the least, they are strangely applicable to Pugin himself, to Lord Shrewsbury, and to Ambrose March-Phillipps de Lisle.

Osmond may have benefited much in many ways from Pugin's friendship; Osmond's tablets, or "blisters," did not, for of all his many, and rarely good, memorials, his Gothic ones are among the worst. Pugin thought of himself as a craftsman, and of Osmond as his "fellow" in this. He appealed to history, yet found now few craftsmen to follow him. He failed utterly to understand that to those "fellow" craftsmen the classical orders were part of their grammar; that they could appeal to history also. Pugin, consciously or not, discerned their lack of creativity; but where would an Osmond have been without his Doric porticoes? Why, such a man might well ask himself, discard a thing historically familiar for generations at the bidding of a devotee, however single-minded? As Newman was later to protest, "men will not be put down by an authority which is not infallible." On the other hand, Pugin directed the Gothicism tendencies. His elders—Rickman, Cottingham, Savage—were concerned with the grammar of Gothic as a style. Pugin lifted the whole Gothicking movement above the level of grammar, and it is in that sense that he uniquely is the director of the movement; and only a devotee could have achieved this. Pugin compelled men to understand Gothic more fully. Yet, granted this, Pugin's appeal to history was too partial. Despite him, the Oratory was built; so were other churches, for example, St. Augustine's, Tunbridge Wells; and secular work of the most dignified order, like the old Dorchester House or the art of Alfred Stevens, likewise asserted the legitimacy of models other than Gothic. But if Pugin's historical partiality combined for good as a cogent directive force, he did one great disservice to posterity by belittling Horace

Walpole and Strawberry Hill. Walpole, a man inexplicable except on the assumption that he was in fact also great, spent half a century on purposeful work and used Gothic forms to evoke, indeed, to enshrine, history. The evocation is no mere sham; Walpole, however different his method, was no less than Pugin a creative originator. But by Pugin's day a battle of styles was already raging. Pugin took sides—but why the battle? Revolutions were one cause; political, industrial, agricultural, romantic. Then the status of craftsmen sank as the close connexion in the boroughs between crafts and local government broke down. Boroughs had expanded, but not their liberties; the protective nature of the old borough, originally a gild merchant,¹ was condemned as restrictive. Craftsmen in stone, it is true, survived rurally near quarries, but to them the battle of styles meant little. The neo-Hellenists were other, and specific, culprits. Sir Joshua Reynolds, of all people, stated dogmatically that to use contemporary dress in sculpture entailed “the prostitution of a great art to mean purposes.” A Soane or a C. R. Cockerell was creative enough to avoid the architectural implication that the archless Hellenic style was right and the arched (Roman) Renaissance wrong; but not all were thus independent. The result, in times of such change, was confusion and contradiction. The educated English of the 1820's resembled St. Paul's Athenians in being always ready to hear something new. If battle there was to be, Gothic won. Horace Walpole, Strawberry Hill, and the first history of English art, were justified; Sir Walter Scott succeeded Walpole, and Pugin, Scott. But the battle of styles was not of their making. Neo-Hellenism cannot be omitted: it was the odder for being scattered and not general among nations, and its virulence set an example. Other Gothicists than Pugin were virulent: the condemnation of Classical work as “Grecian” is quite indiscriminate, and betrays a confused judgment. Pugin was born into an England of which this was one element, and he is not wholly to be blamed for an intemperance in words already established. A further confusion arose, because ancient Greece was necessarily pagan in a way untrue of Rome; so that

¹ In Oxford opposed to the (gild of the) University, which in the seventeenth century still introduced craftsmen and tradesmen into the place on its own independent authority and to serve itself—much to the annoyance of the town.

the word "pagan" was also used without discrimination. The consequences are familiar.

Doctor Johnson said that a century's continuous use made a book a classic. Pugin died on September 14, 1852, and a centenary article must take into account at least the century before as well as that after the subject's death. In a curious way, from various causes, Pugin remained largely blind to the three English centuries of that craft in which he felt such fellowship. His *émigré* father could not explain it, and doubtless was too easy-going to enquire; his Protestant mother could not explain it either. Yet Pugin's *Contrasts* equal Cobbett's *History of the Reformation* for perspicacity and love of England. They were radical because they knew the need of roots. Walpole garnered a crop with equal perspicacity and love of England. But he was dead, and the age was one for Cobbett, son of the English soil, and Pugin, in whom the friction of two heritages, European taste and English practicality, flamed from his town-bred boyhood. Cobbett was so conscious of rural history; Pugin so little conscious of the English history of his craft, and of his own place in that history. If both were onesided, both are lovable, because in the event both elevated the minds of posterity.

Perhaps the English Catholic engraver, whose manuscript notes on the history of English art Horace Walpole bought, edited, and published, was really the unwitting begetter of it all, namely, George Vertue, who in religion inherited and kept what Pugin sought and found and also kept. Certainly the many aspects of Pugin each severally compare on equal terms with a remarkable variety of men whom one can only call great; in whose company we can after a century see him take his rightful place. That century has seen no dimming of his name and his achievement.

DYMER: MYTH OR POEM?

IN 1926 a long poem, *Dymer*, by C. S. Lewis, came out under the pen-name of Clive Hamilton. It had one or two appreciative notices at the time; but since then has been out of print.

The new edition of *Dymer* (Dent, 7s 6d), which came out some time ago, suggests that the publishers believe (I think rightly) that there has been a marked change in the mood of the poetry-reading public since the 'twenties. The enquiries of psychologists and anthropologists into the nature and meaning of myth and symbol and also a good deal of experimenting with new forms in ballet, opera, drama and the novel have made possible now a response, not possible twenty-five years ago, to such a work as *Dymer*. It is a work which it is difficult to label or assess, as it is not easy to decide whether it should be judged primarily as myth or poem. Mr. Lewis, himself, however, in the introduction to his little *George Macdonald Anthology*, suggests a useful distinction between myth and poetry.

In a myth [he writes] the pattern of events is all that matters. . . . Any means which succeeds in lodging these events in our imagination has, as we say, done the trick. In poetry the words are the body and the content is the soul. In myth the imagined events are the body and something inexpressible is the soul.

When I first read *Dymer* nine years ago I had the impression that I was watching a ballet. The poem is long—nine cantos of some thirty stanzas each; but the pattern of events which it "lodged in my imagination" was so vivid that I had little difficulty when I had finished in jotting it down in the form of seven scenes or "movements." These remained in my mind for a number of years though their significance eluded me until I met Miss Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns of Poetry*. Through the train of thought which her book stimulated, I came to realize why the imagery of Mr. Lewis's poem had continued to haunt me. Miss Bodkin's argument stresses, of course, the part that myth has to play in all great art—myth, that is, in the sense of powerful symbols touching off at unconscious levels in us age-old patterns of experience. She suggests that the artist or poet feels human joys, terrors, conflicts and aspirations not necessarily with greater intensity than his fellows, but in such a way that his inner experience projects itself in compelling images (Nietzsche's "vision generated by a dance"); and it is these images that the artist is driven to work into a coherent order and design. It is his task to lay on the inchoate emotional life of mankind forms by which funda-

mental human experiences may be made objective and so be more fully understood and entered into. Cf. Mr. Eliot's "When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience."

There is risk, I suppose, for a writer such as Mr. Lewis that the critic may come to the surface before the artist has finished his particular task. In the book-form of his *Pilgrim's Regress*, for instance, there was a good deal of conscious and deliberate allegorizing. This in the radio dramatic-version was stripped away and the myth emerged much more plainly. But the myth-element is, in fact, present in all Mr. Lewis's imaginative works and the great archetypal patterns with which Miss Bodkin is chiefly concerned emerge in clear and bold colours again and again. One of these—the pattern of conflict-leading-to-death-and-rebirth—is familiar, of course, to the experience of most people who in any way accept the claims of the moral law. This theme, which in the planetary novel, *Perelandra*, is presented in a setting of unusual beauty is already present in *Dymer*. Another theme, too, which Miss Bodkin discusses in terms of Paradise-Hades: Heaven and Hell—a theme of inescapable tensions—in one form or another underlies all Mr. Lewis's writings. I am among those who find his contrasted shapes of beauty and animal violence; simplicity and tortuousness; comfort and horror, convincing, disturbing and prophetic.

Though both these patterns are to be found fairly fully developed in *Dymer*, there can also be detected another buried theme. It is with this that I am most concerned, for I believe it to have special significance for poetry to-day, i.e. the poet's relation to his Muse. What follows is, of course, my own interpretation: how far Mr. Lewis would accept it, I cannot say. But to me it is significant that in *Dymer*, the central figure is neither "heroic" nor yet the figure of Everyman. It is the figure of a poet struggling to achieve his poetic destiny.

If it is true that one of the artist's chief functions is to lay form on human emotions so that they may be harmonized and therefore more fully understood, disciplined and enjoyed; it is scarcely surprising that in the upheaval of World War I the task proved too hard. Normal emotional experience was rendered impossible. Philosophy and religion, the traditional allies of the arts in shaping and directing man's instinctive life, had broken down. Writers along with other artists fumbled in the chaos around them for occasional and individual clues. It is to this period that *Dymer* belongs.

Mr. Lewis tells us in his Preface to the second edition of the poem, that he was attempting in it to present with detachment and contempt his own earlier poetic urgencies then recently outgrown. In this I

cannot see that he succeeded. For me, rather, the poem not only stirs sympathetic memories of my own youthful agonies and ecstasies but gives them a new and unexpected weight. Dymer, "the weak, the passionate and the fool of dreams" becomes a figure representative of Man's inconsolable longing for union with Nature—a longing which the modern mood, culminating in two wars, has almost destroyed. "Normal" people try to express or suppress this fundamental urge by dissecting, analysing and exploiting Nature for their own ends: but the Poet (using the word in its widest sense) is suffocated by this detached impersonal approach. Dymer, in the poem driven by his own response to natural beauty, leaves the City and tries in the Forest to find some way back, or through, to union and harmony with the rest of the created world. In other words, the romantic poet asserts that his task is not to come to terms with the mechanistic life of the City, but to follow the old dream of Beauty which his contemporaries have abandoned or denied, since he knows that Man, divorced from his roots in the earth must die. Pitted, however, against this urge to find in solitude a restoration to joy through union with Nature the poem sets out the claims of the community upon the individual. In curious, forceful and unfamiliar images it stresses the poet's recognition that he detests even the lawful claims of the City. This conflict is represented by Dymer's response to two aspects of the archetypal woman-image.

The poet-lover's passionate longing for the solitary enjoyment of Nature appears for a moment to be fulfilled by his union in the Forest with a hidden mysterious bride (the spirit of Beauty of the earlier romantic poets?). But opposed to this secret joy is the powerful image of the Matriarch, who embodies what is felt to be the hated pressure of moral and social traditions and codes. Shapeless, repellent, manifold, she effectually bars Dymer's return to the many-pillared, many-doored but deserted palace of Romantic Tradition and drives him out to face a fuller experience of life.

It is only after Dymer has endured "the harsh slap of reality" and passed through the cheats and illusions common to man (the two Cantos that describe the pull of the Occult, which offers escape into dreams are to my mind the most imaginatively powerful of all), it is only then that the Muse herself is able to appear to him. He sees her at last as she really is, cool and mature in the knowledge of pain. Through her, Dymer recognizes the weak and limited nature of his early longings and knows that he must destroy the creature born of his union in the Forest with his first love, since she is now seen to be only the shadow of that reality for which he had searched so long. In destroying his own creation, Dymer—the type of the Romantic

Poet who had desired only the fulfilment of his own unassuageable hunger—dies and in his dying, the “airish beast,” “the monster” to whom he had given birth, becomes a god, i.e., his old romantic longings pass through the grave and gate of death and new and vital poetic powers are released.

In a short poem by Mr. Lewis that appeared in *Punch* (May 1949), *Adam at Night*, one may wonder if we have a hint of the quality of these new powers. In this poem the sick, romantic longing of Dymer for “Eden-fields long-lost by man,” is replaced by a serene and confident assurance about the true nature of Man’s relationship to the Cosmos. This new poetic consciousness, which so far as I know is peculiar to Mr. Lewis, indicates two aspects of Man’s relationship to Nature—a deep sense of organic unity with her, coupled with a profound sense of responsibility towards her.

There is a seed of vision here poles removed from poetic pantheism, in that it goes far beyond it. It is a vision for lack of which it seems to me, mankind is at times drifting, at times riding hard into a violation of its true role which is likely to prove disastrous.

In the light of this later poem, and one or two others of a similar nature, *Dymer*, I think, may not unreasonably be regarded as a prelude or opening act of a theme that I hope may yet be fully unfolded in another long poem or cycle of poems. Its quality as myth can, I think, scarcely be disputed; but it is not by its plot-images alone that the poem influences the reader. It is as poetry that it has power to reawaken sharply those moods and desires which the poem sets out to examine.

Judged by certain standards of modern verse, *Dymer* suffers, of course, from two glaring defects. Not only is its long story held throughout in closely compact verse-form; but it is also easily intelligible. There is no private imagery here—all is old, familiar, tireless as Spring. A high-hanging lark, a valley of stone, the darkness smooth as amber, the sudden quivering in the wood, the dry leaf in its endless loiter earthward, the wheeling thunder, the coiled flame that runs like living wire—these may linger in the reader’s mind; may perhaps awake disturbing evocative echoes; but they need no notes or appendices for their interpretation. Those, however, who are not unwilling to read a “classic” because it appears ahead of its time may, I fancy, read and re-read *Dymer* and enjoying Mr. Lewis once again as myth-maker may discover him as poet.

M. MILNE

REVIEWS

THE AMERICAN NOVEL

Fifty Years of the American Novel, 1900-1950, edited by Harold C. Gardiner, S.J. (Scribners 21s).

THIS BOOK, this experiment one might call it, is marked at once by extreme boldness and by extreme restraint. There is boldness in the project, boldness in the selection of novelists, boldness above all in the sub-title, *A Christian Appraisal*. But in the execution there is that restraint, that arduous precision and modest integrity, which distinguishes the best American criticism. There is no attempt to drag in *a priori* the principles of Catholic theology. Principles there are, but they are literary ones derived from a close study of the novel at its varied best. Christianity provides the salt of the appraisal, its distinctive flavour, in two ways that are strictly complementary, negative and positive. Negatively, by removing the beam from the critical eye before attending to the author's mote; and positively, when a theological conclusion does impose itself, by reaching it through a strictly inductive inquiry. This two-way attitude is an invaluable mediator between the old and the new. Thus, Mr. Brady writing on John P. Marquand, and referring to the "theological dimension" which has become a common feature of recent novels, says:

The novel . . . is not normally theological. Marquand is conspicuous among his contemporaries in writing the normal novel of the central tradition: the novel of Henry Fielding, Jane Austen and Anthony Trollope, as set over against the novel of Laurence Sterne, Emily Brontë and Graham Greene.

The critic has discovered Marquand's true value by using the Faith as a discerning light, not as a dogmatic firebrand. On the positive side, dealing with the special case of Willa Cather, Mr. Connolly's conclusion seems very justly worked-out: that her writing was at its greatest when she was beginning to understand the "theological dimension," and it tailed off when she ceased trying to understand it.

At the cost of crudely summarizing (and of not mentioning interesting studies of Dreiser, Dos Passos and others), it may be said that the novelists and their critics fall into four categories. There are those authors as different in temper as Ellen Glasgow and William Faulkner whose work is intrinsically "ethical" not "sensational"; and here, as in Miss Fremantle's gracious study of Edith Wharton, the critic's achievement has been to *discern* the traditional bone-structure, Cavalier or Puritan, that ensures lasting beauty when the bloom of popularity

has vanished. Then there is the 1920 generation which deliberately cut loose from the accepted code. Here the critics have been able to show that these liberals were at their best when they were not drifting with the liberal tide, but striking back unconsciously to shore: Sinclair Lewis when he hit on the old tradition of type-characters, Scott Fitzgerald when he pulled himself together in *The Great Gatsby*. Then there is the 1930 generation which was well adrift from Christianity when it started. Christianity might seem grotesquely irrelevant to writers of such electric power as Hemingway and Steinbeck. But time has shown that these too have had to grope towards some ultra-sensational reality: Hemingway straying into a Nietzschean dream-world, and Steinbeck, less grandly, into degenerate sentimentality. The sub-titles may indicate the critics' approach: "Ernest Hemingway: The Missing Third Dimension" and "John Steinbeck: Life Affirmed and Dissolved."

Finally, there is a glance at the future in the glare of the eruption of post-war novels of chaos and despair. The wheel has come full circle, and the "theological dimension" is urgently in demand, if only as a literary preservative, for anger and self-pity are poor stuff if there is no intuitive faith behind them. But faith, as Mr. Joost concludes, is flat and savourless unless it has been worked out from within, sweated out through the tangle of reality: unless it comes from "such novelists as Undset and Waugh and Mauriac" who can say: "This is the way. I have been there and have returned with my story. Here it is."

Fr. Gardiner has done a great work in assembling these fifteen contributors. The only disquieting thought is that such expert criticism usually comes *after* a great period of creative writing, not before. As regards creative writing by American Catholics one must fervently hope that in this case the process will be reversed.

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

SIMONE WEIL

Waiting on God, by Simone Weil. Translated by Emma Craufurd (Routledge 12s 6d).

The Need for Roots, by Simone Weil. Translated by A. Wills, with a preface by T. S. Eliot (Routledge 18s).

WE RECALL that Simone Weil was Jewish and born in Paris in 1909; she was extremely precocious, became a school-mistress, developed a hatred for compulsion, and took up a job in the Renault works to learn what working-men's life was really like. She fell ill, but spent several weeks with the republican army in Spain and developed a horror for war. Ill again, she left Paris for Marseilles and

became devoted to a Fr. Perrin, O.P., afterwards imprisoned by the Gestapo. She worked on the land, to have direct experience of that sort of labour too, but sailed for New York in 1942. Almost at once she was called to England by the Provisional Government to draw up a report on what the conditions in France were and should be: but she refused to eat more than her compatriots in occupied France were getting, and died in April 1943, aged thirty-three. Mr. Eliot rightly says we should try to understand her personality before passing judgment on her writings, and no one will be tempted to deny that she was a most remarkable woman. She was passionately concerned with "things heavenly and things earthly," but her passion seems to us febrile; her brain was in constant agitation; she was on a nervous rack. She should not have supposed that a few months in a factory or on the land could make her really understand the "worker": she would not have liked (or disliked) what the most sophisticated, even, of such men and women did. Brilliant as she was, ceaselessly occupied, and so often ill, she cannot possibly have really assimilated Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, let alone have entered into the *mind* of China or India or even the nearer East. She selected and rejected what she preferred; she accepted theories without evidence; she recast what she retained into the moulds that suited her. Thus she rejects practically all the Old Testament: she sees nothing in the history of Rome save brutality and atheism—even Vergil must not be called a poet even though "delightful" to read, for was he not a venal servant of Augustus? She worships the Greeks, though meaning by that not even (as so many do) a fraction of the populace of the brief-flowering city Athens, but the *Iliad*, the *Agamemnon*, parts of Plato (not Aristotle, tutor of belligerent Alexander), the earliest days of Stoicism and the Eleusinian (and other) Mysteries. In these she seems to discern rare and swiftly stifled survivals of an earlier civilization, and she thinks she finds a similar sublime doctrine in India, Egypt and the Chaldeans, and fancies, for example, that Zeus's thunder-bolt meant the direct shaft of love thrust from the heart of God into the soul of man. As for Rome, it destroyed all spirituality that it encountered—the marvellous civilizations of Carthage (Moloch included), Egypt and the Druids; and the same un-Holy Ghost infected the Church when, e.g., she destroyed the "embryo civilization" of the Albigenes which, with its Manichean and Gnostic backgrounds, might have grown up free from slavery. This recalls the wilder fancies of the theosophists.

But it does not represent her deeper self, though her *ideas about* herself, and the world, were still chaotic. She wished for "absolute" truth, which meant "absolute" detachment, which she interpreted as "absolute" independence. She wanted to be *in* the crowd, but not of

it: allegiance would have implied an authority outside herself, being dictated to, and so, verbal and even mental insincerity. This must account for two of the paradoxes she provides. First, she was passionately devoted to our Lord and believed that the Catholic Church was His creation: yet, since the Church had used *force* ever since Constantine made it a State-Church, she would not contemplate baptism. Her mind was locked against that, somewhat as Peguy's was locked against receiving the Sacraments in which he whole-heartedly believed. Secondly, she could not adhere to anything unless she *saw* it with the whole of herself. If she did, the "seeing" would come direct from God, and to "adhere" would be pure obedience. This accounts for her constant precognizing of obedience and never (as far as one can see) doing anything she was told. Fr. Perrin, to whom she opened her heart so fully, says that he never knew her to give way in any argument. Her "Attente de Dieu," "Waiting on God," really meant that she waited for God to act in the way *she* wanted. The second book was due to her considering herself asked how best France could recapture her spiritual life, and is far more orderly than her outpourings to Fr. Perrin, though, even so, its detached phrases are more noteworthy than any sustained argument. Many of her continual flow of assertions are just and penetrating; some are unintelligible; many contradict previous ones. You cannot mistake the passionate sincerity with which she inveighs against the false gods of modern life, e.g. exclusivist nationalism, or pride in military conquest. She writes well, not seldom, on liberty, property, hierarchy, or the villainous effect of such propaganda as the Russian one has; but too often she cries "That's a lie!" when she disapproves of something; an almost Hebraic denunciation interferes with French clarity of exposition. It is because she has sometimes been talked of as a second Pascal (she didn't like him) or indeed a sort of Sibyl, that we have stressed the defects of these documents rather than their virtues. We genuinely sympathize with her complicated mind—so tortured that it positively writhes. We agree with Mr. Eliot that maturer thought might have been hoped from her had she lived a good deal longer. But then, she never could, in our world where in family, city, countryside the up-torn "roots" are bleeding to death. It is a relief to turn to *Mirror to Russia* by Lady Kelly, also a Frenchwoman; or to Christopher Dawson's *Understanding Europe*. Mlle. Weil's books are invaluable as revealing *her*, but not much more (so far as human society goes) than the *Recit d'une Soeur* did about its author's world. All of them suggest: "Turn all of us into Saints, and all will be well"; but how engineer a new Pentecost?

C. C. MARTINDALE

MISS WHITE'S NEW NOVEL

The Sugar House, by Antonia White (Eyre and Spottiswoode 12s 6d).

IT IS A GREAT JOY to the friends and admirers of Miss Antonia White to be able to welcome another novel from her pen. *Frost in May*, whether or not it was "immediately recognized as a classic," as her publishers claim, did at the very least show that a writer of genuine power and perceptiveness had been added to the ranks of English novelists. It would be difficult to estimate the effect which that book had on the process of liberalizing the discipline in convent schools, but there can be little doubt that it was considerable. But we had to wait for many years before the promise of that early work was fulfilled in *The Lost Traveller*. And now, as soon as we could have hoped for it, *The Sugar House* appears to confirm and increase her reputation.

How easy she makes it all seem! Characters, dialogue, situations, plot—all are handled with a mastery which brings complete conviction. Clara Batchelor, the central figure of what is clearly to be a sort of spiritual Aeneid in fiction (though for her Rome is not a distant goal), finds herself touring with a theatrical company, which is like all the theatrical companies which have ever toured, yet remains individual and authentic. The opening scene in the refreshment room at King's Cross, with Clara waiting for the insufferable Stephen Tye (whom we see through before he ever appears and long before Clara herself is disillusioned), is portrayed with such vividness that we almost hear the hissing engines outside and the clatter of crockery within. From there to York and Huddersfield, Nottingham and Leeds, Nuneaton and Liverpool, up and down the pages of Bradshaw, in and out of lodgings only distinguished one from the other because there is sometimes a piano, Clara and her good and bad companions move wearily towards the inevitable climax. Yet the reader is never wearied.

Suddenly, with an almost savage abruptness, and with a sort of symbolic shift, Clara's stage-life is over and she is married, not to the impossible Stephen but to Archie. With her marriage, it is as though a new dimension is added to existence. The symbolism is not now that of the stage but of the "house of her dreams" which is yet so far, in reality, from what she had anticipated. But it would be misleading to suggest that this is a Kafka-like novel or to imply that the symbolism is in any way intruded. On the contrary it is part of Miss White's skill that she can tell a forthright story, with directness and realism, with an economy of phrase which can yet reveal to the reader the deeper issues with which she is mainly concerned.

For Miss White knows all too well that conventional happy endings

rarely tell the truth, and that most novelists, if they were honest, would have to admit that the end is always another beginning. As the novel ends—" . . . she crossed the road and let herself in to spend her last night in the sugar house"—we are already looking forward, asking what is to come. Whatever it may be, we know that it will be as satisfying, as genuine and as compelling as what has gone. If, at times, the outward drama seems too slight to bear the stress of the inner tensions, that is only because the external must always remain an inadequate vehicle for the interior. Not even the most tremendous of the mystics have succeeded in describing or explaining how the soul's supernatural destiny is shaped in and through its natural experiences. But Miss White knows, as her fellow-Catholics, Mr. Waugh and Mr. Graham Greene know, that that is what is happening all the time; she shares their power to convey that final truth.

T. CORBISHLEY

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S NOTE-BOOKS

The Note-Books of Matthew Arnold, edited by Howard Foster Lowry, Karl Young and Waldo Hilary Dunn (Oxford University Press 50s).

THIS LARGE VOLUME of 656 pages contains everything which the editors thought worth reprinting from the note-books in which, for thirty-seven years, Arnold jotted down any passage which struck him in his daily reading. The editors deserve our thanks for the piety and scholarship which characterize their work, a work which occupied them for some twenty years. They beg the reader's indulgence for frequent repetitions, and remind us that some of these phrases came to mean a great deal for Arnold, but they make no attempt to explain what conceivable significance some of these oft-repeated phrases could possibly have had, e.g., *Bernarde ad quid venisti?* There are 429 extracts from the *Imitatione Christi* of which 283 are repetitions. Some extracts are repeated no less than thirteen times. Surely the fact that a passage had been repeated in the note-books and the number of repetitions could have been indicated by a footnote and the space saved used for editorial comment? The admirable preface is tantalizing in its brevity.

Many of the passages quoted have a kind of period charm, such as, for instance, Dr. Arnold's tribute to Germany as "the birthplace of the most moral race of men that the world has yet seen; of the soundest laws, the least violent passions, and the fairest domestic and civil virtues," and it is amusing to read Lord Derby's speech in 1880 when he explained that militarism cannot exist with industry on a great scale and that the last thing which the Emperors, Grand Dukes and so forth

desire is the development of manufacturing industries. "Do you suppose it would suit them to have to do with an intelligent, keen-witted, critical and well-to-do population such as our northern towns in England contain? Depend upon it they are not such fools. What they want is something quite different—a peasantry hungry enough at home to find the ordinary life of a private soldier rather agreeable than otherwise, and submissive enough to shoot their own brothers if ordered without asking why."

Matthew Arnold shared his father's reverence for Germany. There are no quotations from Boswell's *Life of Johnson* but far too many prosy platitudes culled from that incomparably inferior book, Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe*, such as, "It is not enough to know, one must also use one's knowledge. It is not enough to desire, one must also act." Renan, whom few people read to-day, is represented by nearly a hundred quotations; Ruskin, who is sharing in the great revival of interest in the Victorians, is only quoted four times. Newman is represented by four unimportant quotations from an unimportant work. Though the quotations from the Bible, from the *Imitation* and from many other religious sources outnumber all the rest, there is no evidence in these note-books that Arnold had the slightest interest in Apologetics. John Stuart Mill though an agnostic summarizes very convincingly the case for miracles, but Arnold was content with his own *ex cathedra* statement, "miracles don't occur." He argues that we "can do without a personal God," but this profoundly religious man would have been horrified to be described as an atheist, and yet it is as silly to talk about an impersonal God as to advertise non-alcoholic wine. Nobody could possibly be ruder about all forms of Protestantism other than broad Church Anglicanism than Arnold. His constant references to the "dissidence of Dissent," a phrase which he lifted without acknowledgment from Burke, just as he lifted his other famous phrase, "sweetness and light," from Swift, infuriated Nonconformists, and few non-Catholics have been more appreciative of Catholicism. "Who has seen the poor in other churches as they are seen in Catholic churches?" "What is sound in Protestantism is Renaissance-work—it has done nothing in religion proper. What it has done in this must perish." "The Puritan type of life offers: A religion not true, the claims of intellect not satisfied, the claim of beauty not satisfied, the claim of manners not satisfied." The British middle class presents "A defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners."

He admired Catholicism for its "immense poetry, the gradual work of time and nature, and of that great impersonal artist Catholic Christendom"; and knew so little of the Church that he confused the accidents and the substance, and believed that the poetry could be

retained and the dogma of which it is an expression rejected. Miss Isobel Macdonald in her charming novel *The Buried Self*, which I far prefer to any other study of Arnold, has tried to imagine Arnold's reactions to a skilful champion of the Catholic case for miracles, but there is no evidence that he was even aware that such a case existed. Certainly he never suspected that in proportion as Protestantism adopted his advice and discarded dogma, it would die.

Arnold's religious philosophy is not only dated but refuted by the logic of events, but there is a timeless quality in his poetry. Indeed his finest poetry is as much superior to modern poetry as his best criticism is inferior to the best criticism of our century.

ARNOLD LUNN

A LANCASHIRE RECUSANT

Blundell's Diary and Letter Book, 1702-1728, edited by Margaret Blundell (The University Press of Liverpool £1).

MISS BLUNDELL has followed up her successful book *Cavalier* with the story of another member of the Blundell family, Nicholas, who was born in 1669. The material taken from his journals is presented not only in a scholarly way but with such skill that one feels a personal acquaintance with the kindly, interfering man, his wife, his daughter Mally and her wooers, and the whole circle of Catholic gentry and people round about Crosby Hall.

In spite of the penal legislation, it was only after the 1715 rising that the family were in any personal danger and the squire had first to hide in the priest's hole, "a Streat place for a fat man," and then go abroad for two years. Though their religion was known to the whole neighbourhood, and the rewards for betraying priests were large, they paid their fines and lived on the best of terms with their Protestant neighbours.

Mrs. Blundell was a sickly woman, and often subjected to the fierce treatments of the physicians of the time, so it is not surprising that her temper was most uneven. In 1707 her husband wrote to the Provincial of the Jesuits in England, asking for a chaplain:—

We desire a Man of Wit and Conversasion, one that can preach well and is willing to take Pains amongst ye poore Catholicks, of which we have a great Many.

A Father Aldred was sent to live with the family, but Mrs. Blundell did not like him. Another letter therefore was sent, after some months, to the Provincial:—

I ought long since to have returned you thanks for the good

Man you sent us viz: Mr. Aldred who is qualified according as desired and is extreemly to my liking and gives very great Satisfaction to the Catholicks hereabouts who are very numerous, but cannot say my Wife carries to him so sivilly as she ought.

So a house was provided for the priest near by, with a chapel in the attic. The Squire, who wanted to manage everything himself, drew up the designs and oversaw the building. The local clergy seem to have been most friendly, and when Mr. Aldred died in 1728 he had a grand funeral attended by the Parson. Nicholas Blundell himself, after due consultation with ecclesiastical and legal experts, became a Churchwarden of the Parish. The duties were mainly connected with the Poor Law, but it is revealing to know that in such a district Catholics were not wholly cut off from local administration.

One could quote from the book indefinitely. There are all sorts of interesting things; the education of the girls in a convent in Flanders; their clothes and their amusements; the relations of the squire to his servants and labourers; London life as it appeared to a provincial gentleman. As costs go now, this is a cheap book, for it is excellently produced and is definitely one which one would wish to own—and be rather chary of lending.

M. D. R. LEYS

CHARITY BELIEVETH ALL THINGS

Max Josef Metzger, Priest and Martyr, by Lilian Stevenson (S.P.C.K. 9s 6d).

MISS STEVENSON writes with perfect sincerity and is careful to emphasize the no less total loyalty of this remarkable German priest to the Catholic Church. Yet it is a pity that this book is not much fuller and written by a Catholic. Fr. Metzger's career would then be better understood. We knew him first at Oxford and then in Austria just after the first World War. Austrians were then so horribly impoverished that he believed, and proclaimed, that all priests *ought* to be "as poor as the poorest." He acted on this, and we stayed with him at Graz, his H.Q., and at Ulrichsbrunn and lived on radishes and icy apples. He eschewed all meat and even coffee. It was, really, over his kind of life that he first got into difficulties, and not because he preached peace and charity issuing into the formation of an alliance between all men of good will. To understand this, one has to realize the Austrian background even if one does not go back so far as Joseph II. The Church was so rigidly controlled by the State that priests were practically civil servants. The cast-iron etiquette of the court was compensated for by much libertinage, especially among the

aristocracy, who none the less were official mainstays of the Church; and with them the hierarchy was tightly bound up. The war had reduced the peasants to such misery that even the lovely piety of the Tyrol seemed unable to survive. English university students did all they could to send help to their starving confrères in Germany and Austria, and we ourselves were bitterly rebuked for doing so. No wonder Fr. Metzger felt that no sacrifice could be too great to help such a situation. He started in a humble way his White Cross League: we watched its workshops, its printing press, its educational and charitable departments, and not least its evenings of Offered Souls, i.e. people so apparently demolished that all one could do for them was to "offer" them to God and give them an hour of warmth, some food, and affection. His League consisted of Brothers and Sisters, but (if I remember right) could find no sanction in Austria, anyhow not at Graz, though it was eventually welcomed in Germany. Yet in a sense he was born too early, wished to move much too fast, and expressed himself far too vaguely. In proportion as he concentrated on Peace, denouncing all war, and Unity, using phrases which needed so little alteration to make them unambiguous, he was bound to come into conflict with the Nazis when it was their turn. After a singularly shameful betrayal, preposterous accusations, and a dreadful imprisonment, he was decapitated on April 17, 1944, in the Brandenburg prison. No friend was near him; but a prison employee is said to have recorded that "Never have I seen a man die like that," so transfigured with joy was he. The book contains some of his letters and many verses written in prison. He was heroic; yet we seemed to feel in him more German sentimentality than Austrian gaiety. Alas, that so much that was pure and beautiful in Austria, and all that was happy, seems to have been destroyed.

C. C. MARTINDALE

THE ART OF TINTORETTO

Tintoretto, by Eric Newton (Longmans 50s).

TINTORETTO'S IS AN ORIGINAL, strange, exciting genius. No one before had painted as he did, but after him other painters of greatness, like El Greco, show his stamp. He was a painter from the first, with a passion for paint and avid for spaces of wall to cover. From the first, he had his own originality, the feeling for the particular landscape, for the dramatic gesture, the dramatic lighting, for the body in action and movement. What the springs of his originality and strangeness were, the reasons for his particular modulation of existing language, makes interesting speculation. Among many other things, in his *Tintoretto* Mr. Newton suggests some answer.

In the end, no doubt, it is not possible, or fruitful, to relate Tintoretto's consuming interest in dramatic effect and in the human body in movement to anything other than Tintoretto—to anything else, that is, apart from his own passion, being the sort of man he was, for this sort of subject and treatment, and the sort of man he was being revealed by the subject and treatment that he liked. There is, however, one observation that Mr. Newton suggests when he links Tintoretto's art to the Counter-Reformation and to Jesuit spirituality. It is an undeveloped suggestion, for Mr. Newton is not at home in Catholic spirituality or in mysticism or in the Counter-Reformation. Tintoretto was not a visionary and (in this one respect unlike Ignatius Loyola) not a mystic: there is no one less so. He was just a fervent Catholic who believed firmly in the Redemption, who realized with a powerful imagination the glory of the risen life of Christ in which, by grace, Christians participate. He is, therefore, that very rare bird, a genuine religious humanist, and for the same reason quite unlike a characteristic Renaissance artist.

To a man who believed what Tintoretto did and realized it with his passionate conviction, miracles are, of course, not in themselves of any importance. But they become important if the man is also an artist, because miracle is of its nature a sign, visible therefore and dramatic, and a sign of divine power thrusting into humankind. And this may well be why Tintoretto's subject of predilection is the story of a miracle in which supernatural power flashes down visibly among men in dramatic and sweeping movement.

It is, I think, a weakness in Mr. Newton that he cannot imaginatively relive the spiritual background from which he knows that Tintoretto drew sustenance. It is a weakness that permits him to say some strange things. Another weakness may be a reluctance to accept Tintoretto's intentions, since in the works that Mr. Newton discusses Tintoretto so obstinately persists in telling stories. Since he does, it is not promising to be told that in so far as a figure contributes to a story it loses its own individuality as a figure. If this proposition were true, the figures, in Tintoretto's large-scale works, that are most significant "in their own right" would be the odd figures and shapes in the backgrounds or in the crowds that are hardly related to the action depicted. But luckily the proposition is false.

Mr. Newton's book is to be welcomed and commended. He has done a workmanlike job on his subject; the life and times are interestingly and well told, and he has many a good observation to make. It is a book that should quicken the understanding of a major and strange, and too much neglected, painter.

VINCENT TURNER

SHORTER NOTICES

I Go Where I'm Sent, by David Walker (Chapman and Hall 15s).

MR. WALKER says that his book's purpose "was to try to show the need for more people to see more places, and the hopes that could be raised for peace by nations coming to know one another by a maximum of direct personal contact." Well, all that is becoming harder; besides, we English have been in "personal contact" for a long time with many people, and alas, peace has not been the result. We ourselves need an education that issues into humility. I think Mr. Walker's books should provide not a little of such education. He takes us from France to Germany, Jugo-Slavia, Trieste, Korea, Rumania, more Germany, Persia (and the Sheikdom of Kuwait), Egypt and still other places. Superficiality inevitable? *His* outlook is not superficial, but he cannot prevent our own from being so. No man more frank than he. He knows our gullibility—or again, despondency—because after all editors demand a "story" from their men: a correspondent can hardly but want to go one better than his personal friend but journalistic rival; and he acknowledges the frightful distortion, suppression, and sheer falsification, at home, of reports received. (We know all the excuses; and, also, the probity of certain journals: but we are grateful for a book like this one.) We cannot be rebuked if we say that the English are, perhaps, temperamentally unfitted to sympathize with the soul of other countries, even if they encounter it: that their mistakes (e.g. in Egypt or Persia) were often due to unimaginativeness, if not injustice: that they have suffered, and are suffering, grave annoyances but none of the agony which half the world is undergoing even now: that they do not know what is going on and, worse, don't particularly want to. We cannot picture what is happening not only in Persia and Egypt, but in Rumania or the artificial State of Jugo-Slavia, or the hardly less artificial State of Czecho-Slovakia, to say nothing of that martyred nation, Hungary, or that Queen of Martyrs, Poland. Least of all can we realize the "psychological-conditioning" of the children in all countries under Soviet domination—if only because we have never tried to condition minds, older or younger, in this land. Mr. Walker does not, in this book, take us to South Africa, nor describe the headlong rush of most of the Whites there into suicide. You must not think that this book is but a catalogue of horrors. Mr. Walker is a *level-minded artist*, and open-eyed. He can see (and tell us) what is funny, and what is first-rate (e.g. the spirit of our average troops), even in the midst of hideous tragedy: he does not disguise the apparent insolubility of many a problem: Trieste; the Saar; the Suez Canal—or the mentality of the Australian who simply longs for a "scrap," or of

the average American: he does no more than hint at the torment of those few politicians who are honest but are forced into being partisans. As for professional financiers, "Look, and pass by." My only regret is that he does not dwell on the *spiritual* present or future of the nations he traverses. Probably, whatever his personal convictions, in this book he could not. He quotes *The Tablet*; so he cannot be unaware of the "spiritual coefficient" still everywhere operative and not, I think, to be for ever murdered. I hope for many more books from Mr. David Walker.

The True Likeness, by R. W. Hynek (Sheed and Ward 16s).

A CZECH PHYSICIAN, Dr. Hynek has written several books in defence of the authenticity of the Turin Shroud. One of these has already been translated into English: *Science and the Holy Shroud*, Chicago 1926. The English version of another of his books has now appeared. It is a popular presentation, based chiefly on the scientific investigations of Vignon, Barbet and Giudica. There is practically no historical evidence for the existence of the Shroud prior to about 1350. Hence many historians, led by Canon Chevalier, have rejected the Shroud as a medieval fake. The late Father Thurston was prominent in this camp; but his case was built entirely on the supposition that the figure on the Shroud was painted. He admitted that if the Shroud really bore the likeness of a man who had been scourged and crucified and had his side pierced after death, the cloth would be genuine. "In no other personage since the world began could these details be verified."—THE MONTH, 101 (1903), 19. It is, therefore, useful to have a good statement of the discoveries which have been made, especially since Enrie published his photographs taken in 1931. The reader can thus not only study the strong arguments against the assumption that the figure is an artefact, but also gain a vivid impression of the horrors of crucifixion.

Dr. Hynek has unfortunately weakened his case by occasionally wandering into exegesis and history, subjects in which he does not appear to be highly competent. For instance, he tries to prove that the Roman Veronica image was copied from the Shroud. In this he was anticipated by Père de Joannis, S.J., in *Études*, 153 (1917), 581. The Veronica image is a Byzantine icon with no claim to be a first-hand portrait; it is now quite illegible, so Dr. Hynek has to use one of the crude woodcuts propagated by M. Dupont, "the holy man of Tours." There are other similarly weak arguments in the book before us. But they are irrelevant to the strong scientific case which now confronts any sceptical historian.

Mirror to Russia, by Marie Noële Kelly (Country Life Ltd. 21s).

LADY KELLY is extremely skilful—the quotation that acts as sub-title seems at first to be a disclaimer of all artistry, but—*je tâche de devenir miroir*—how much harder it is truly to “mirror” what is seen, than to “compose” it into a picture without falsifying it! And despite all modernist sneers at photographic art, we are most grateful for the sixty-five superb photographs in this book and that “Country Life” is to publish another book, *Picture Book of Russia*, consisting of 130 photographs: each book contains a map—the more important since Lady Kelly and her husband are able to visit many places in Russia which had been, and again are, prohibited. The book is not propagandist or polemical—the stranger since it deals with a country which is frantically propagandist; where not only art, theatre, and even science, have to put across the current political and social theories, but where the humblest village seems to blare with grotesque broadcasts about a savage America and Britain. Of course, no corrective word can anywhere be printed or spoken. At first one is inclined to think that this book is indeed to be but a mirror—a brilliant description of the scenes in street or market and of the incredible treasures preserved in churches especially when they have become museums and not factories—though a few are still open for worship, though no faith can, we think, be *taught* there (or anywhere else). But suddenly we realize what is meant by a police-state, where not only armed police or soldiers occupy every strategic point, but where our ambassador could not move a step without four plain-clothes shadows at his heels, looking so oddly out of place in the grand official assemblies—for pageantry with its uniforms and stars and sashes is coming back full-tide, and if there is no class-warfare there are colossal differences in privilege and incomes and displays of no less colossal military power of every sort. Lady Kelly stresses the gentleness and indeed loveliness of the average Russian and the forthcoming gaiety of the children, only to be followed by the dreadful *passivity* noticeable in adolescence and onwards, “the clipping of all wings, the closed personal avenues, the ossification born of a materialistic creed”: “the complete absence of every sort of appeal connected with amusement” in rigidly puritanized Moscow—for the immorality of early revolutionary days has, I suppose, been found too closely allied with self-expression. But, if we wish, we can perhaps disregard the psychological element discernible in this book, and content ourselves with the sheer beauty it reveals; and it is idle to speculate on the future. Our one hope is to build up the Christian life *at home*, and intensify it, if we can, elsewhere.

The Open Night, by John Lehmann (Longmans 15s).

A DOZEN LITERARY FIGURES who have died in the last half century are the subjects of these brief essays. But two general lectures on *The Search for the Myth* and *The Poet and the Modern World*, which form preface and conclusion, expose most plainly the attitude that informs the rest.

This attitude can be summed up in Mr. Lehmann's repetition in 1952 of Matthew Arnold's prophecy in 1880 that "most of what passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry." Yet the mind of man has many ports and as Rimbaud led Claudel so Rilke may yet lead Mr. Lehmann nearer Truth, as he himself half suspects: "For wide masses of people the Christian symbols as they have known them have ceased to be significant, and their desperate need is to find new symbols—even if those symbols should lead us back to a rediscovery of the central meaning of Christianity."

Symbols, therefore, are what matter in this particular spiritual odyssey; and so the poets and novelists whom Mr. Lehmann discusses—Yeats, Virginia Woolf, Rilke, James, Conrad, Proust, Joyce, Edward Thomas, Wilfred Owen, Capetanakis, Alun Lewis—are examined in their symbolist function, as men who know secrets and have experiences not shared by other men except through their mediation. That this can be true of the best work of the greatest poets no reader of Yeats or Rilke or Shakespeare can deny, but in criticism of their work what we need above all is to be shown when it is true and when it is not true, and what is the difference between best and second-best; the difference between work in which the artist merely stands outside and gesticulates, and work in which he has become completely absorbed in his subject. This vital distinction between Intention and Achievement has to be securely based on the analysis and comparison of particular poems, and that requires more space than Mr. Lehmann can afford. But the discipline might have robbed him of such exciting conclusions as, for example, that Edith Sitwell's work is of incomparable myth-making power, or that Shakespeare "had neither an accepted religion nor an accepted philosophy, nor indeed an accepted code of ethics in public affairs within which to work."

A. MACKENZIE SMITH

Lesbia Brandon, by A. C. Swinburne, produced by Randolph Hughes (Falcon Press 35s).

SWINBURNE wrote an (apparently) unfinished novel, fragments of which have been put in order by Mr. Hughes in an extremely scholarly way. Its name may have been invented by Edmund Gosse, but it is certainly "inapt if not inept." Swinburne could not write anything so long as this without passages of great beauty. Anything which reveals his passion for the sea is lovely. There are, too, a few characters that we had not expected from Swinburne, especially the kind-hearted cynic, Lady Midhurst. The merely sadistic-cynic, Mr. Linley, needed no greatly creative imagination. The story is dull, containing (Victorian-wise, we suppose) enormous monologues and descriptions of people's eyes, hands and so on, but it includes also some charming poetry. The book is, of course, full of sadism and masochism, which are here, really, the same thing, since Swinburne, who liked the latter, saw *himself* as the victim of the former; and full, also, of baffling relationships due to incest. What really entertains us is the Foreword and parts of the Commentary and the Notes, for Mr. Hughes wields—like Renaissance scholars and not like, e.g., A. E. Housman—a bludgeon rather than a rapier. He assails (not without cause) Mr. T. J. Wise (followed by Lafourcade) and practically equates with him the poor Mr. Gosse who entered into an "unholy partnership" with him, though he "allowed the worst howlers to pass." Gosse certainly, like Watts-Dunton, wished to suppress parts of Swinburne's *reliques*—how much was destroyed remains obscure; but Mr. Hughes is in a rage with anyone who was "genteel" and struggles to show that Swinburne was to the end "independent" of Watts-Dunton, though (p. 239) "if Watts-Dunton had told him he had lost the missing parts of *Lesbia Brandon*, Swinburne would automatically believe him, and more so as time went on." But it is off the point when he attacks Ezra Pound who cannot answer back (perhaps Mr. T. S. Eliot, "who in many ways burgeons from Pound," might attempt the by-now impossible). Mr. Hughes is going to write another book—*Swinburne, the Arcane Side*—which apparently will deal more frankly with anything that may have been alluded to in this book, though I cannot see what he can add save details, e.g., about flagellation. There is certainly a mid-Victorian revival just now—or has even that passed by? We are glad to escape from this book and its rather clinical atmosphere into an air that Swinburne called "Galilean," but which we find less dated, more free, and more breatheable. Yes: an expenditure of meticulous research over what was not worth it. Swinburne, with his method of melody, was a meteor, but may be thought (not for Galilean reasons) not now to count.

The Aeneid of Virgil. A Verse Translation by Rolfe Humphries
(Charles Scribner's Sons \$3.50).

THE IMPOSSIBLE TASK of translating the great classics has to be attempted anew by and for every generation. It is a coincidence that at the same time on both sides of the Atlantic a well-known poet should be commissioned to translate the *Aeneid*. The text of Cecil Day Lewis's version is not yet before us; we have only the memory of the broadcasts. The aim and methods of both new translators have much in common, to use a free and flexible metre to obtain the speed and vividness, if not the nobility and singing robes, of the original, and to avoid conventional poetic jargon at the cost of even ultra-modernism. Mr. Humphries uses a loose iambic pentameter for what he calls a "quick and unscrupulous job," preferring solecisms to archaisms, though "heroically resisting" some too obvious anachronisms. The vigour and freshness of the resulting narrative style carries one on almost irresistibly, if sometimes rather jerkily and breathlessly. It is always easy to pick passages or phrases for cavil: is "a man of noble presence" enough for *pietate gravem ac meritis vivum*, even if, e.g., Thornhill's "some greybeard sire for patriot worth revered" is too much? "The kind of smile that clears the air" for *risu quo caelum tempestatesque serenat*? Should the "amplifiers" of the sybils' cavern have been resisted? For *pro re pauca loquar*, in one of "those moments when Aeneas is telling Dido off," "I have a point or two to make" is startling, but perhaps right.

But the great passages of Book VI, for instance, are fired by passion and genuinely moving, and what is sometimes abrupt and staccato in his lines, there becomes direct, tense and effective. There are some brilliant things, some flat because too free or too literal, but the general level is high and consistent.

COLIN HARDIE

Christianity and Pagan Culture, by M. L. W. Laistner (Cornell University Press, Oxford University Press 20s).

THIS IS A USEFUL SUMMARY of the evidence concerning the education of the average pagan under the Roman Empire, the attitude of the Fathers and other Christian writers to the pagan classics and the way in which Christianity eventually developed its own system of education. The book consists of three lectures delivered by Professor Laistner at the University of Virginia. By way of Appendix he has added a translation of St. John Chrysostom's (somewhat unconvincing) sermon on *Vainglory and Right Way to Bring Up Children*. It would be idle to pretend that the book is likely to interest the ordinary reader, but the specialist on early Church history will be glad to have it on his shelves.

De La Salle. Letters and Documents, by W. J. Battersby (Longmans 25s).

BROTHER BATTERSBY'S SCHOLARLY WORK upon St. John Baptist de La Salle is well known, but only now—just after the 300th anniversary of the Saint's birth, are his surviving letters published in their entirety. An enormous number have been lost (but may still, many of them, be found), and even these "remained stuck in the pages of an ordinary exercise book and kept under lock and key where few could consult them." Why this was so is unexplained, but we know of many instances of invaluable documents being undivulged because the owners feared to be parted from them or because they might throw discredit on persons or institutes. These letters, the Superior General reminds us in his preface, were written by a Saint, so they will not have contained anything uncharitable. Still, this particular Saint did live in tumultuous times and had his more than fair share of troubles, and perhaps it was thought imprudent to revive the memory of these. But in the long run, the obscuring of facts never makes for edification. But these relatively few letters throw much direct light on the personality of de La Salle and his ideals for his Institute and its schools: the French is printed alongside the translation and the explanatory notes are excellent. In short, this book, together with the author's two previous ones, cannot but become the standard work for all English-speaking countries.

The Church in the Christian Roman Empire, by J. R. Palanque and P. de Labriolle, translated from the French by Ernest C. Messenger, Ph.D. (Burns and Oates 25s).

FATHER ERNEST MESSENGER, before his lamented death which occurred early this year, was happily able to add yet another volume, the sixth, to his translation of the great history of the Church which was planned and begun before the late war under the editorship of Augustin Fliche and Victor Martin. The present volume completes the history up to the death of Theodosius, and treats of such subjects as the sources of early monasticism, the evolution of primitive monasticism in the East, the beginnings of monasticism in the West, and the pagan and Christian attitude to the monastic movement. Further sections deal with the morality and spirituality of the age and the special characteristics of Christian culture of the fourth century. Chapters are added on the Metropolitan sees at the end of that century, the expansion of Christianity, and Catholicism as a state religion. In these six volumes Fr. Messenger has certainly left behind him a striking testimony to his skill in translation and to his untiring industry in his retirement.

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